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Spending Patterns in Congressional Campaigns 1982 and 1984

Robert Stanley Bragg

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SPENDING PATTERNS IN CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS
1982 AND 1984

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Government
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Robert Stanley Bragg
1987

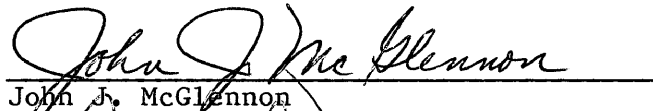
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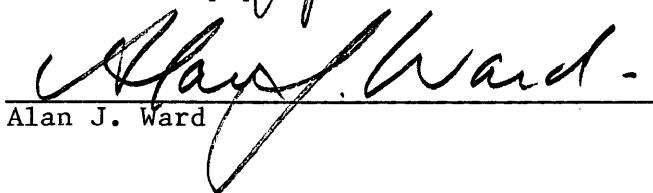
Master of Arts


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Approved, August 1987


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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Charles and Florence Bragg, who consistently prove that volunteerism is as valuable to political candidates as money.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine whether congressional campaign budgeting decisions influence electoral success. Special emphasis was paid to spending levels for opinion polling and media over time for successful and unsuccessful congressional candidates.

Our analysis compared the fundraising and spending patterns over time of congressional elections predicted to be close. The research sample included campaigns from both 1982 and 1984 election years to account for the possible impact of having a presidential election during one of the congressional elections. To avoid the influence of incumbency, all of the candidates in our sample were running for their first terms.

The 1984 data clearly reflected the impact of having a popular presidential candidate running for reelection. Fewer elections were considered competitive and therefore fewer campaigns qualified for our data sample. Furthermore, the congressional candidates from the president's party won election in every case. The 1982 elections, on the other hand, provided more close races for our sample and the number of successful campaigns were evenly split between the Democrats and Republicans.

It was found that there is very little difference between the overall spending patterns of successful and unsuccessful campaigns. On average, spending tends to reflect fundraising in that nearly half of all expenditures are spent during the final quarter of the election year. Successful candidates differ by having, on average, more funds in their total budgets.

The one exceptional difference in budgeting involves the use of opinion polling. Although successful candidates tend to outspend their competition in every area, the difference is more dramatic in the area of opinion polling. It is recommended that the significance of this finding be explored by further research.

Advertising expenditures are, on average, the single largest budget item for all candidates. Most advertising funds were spent on radio and television followed by direct mail and printing. When compared to past research, it was found that all congressional campaigns spent a larger percentage of their budgets on radio and television advertising than past campaigns, suggesting an increase in the level of professionalization at the congressional campaign level.

It was concluded that external factors, such as the reelection of a presidential candidate, have a significant impact on congressional election outcomes. Consequently, some candidates are not successful because external factors do not permit them to raise the necessary funds to run competitive campaigns. Because successful and unsuccessful congressional campaigns tend to budget their funds similarly, the amount of funds raised is more significant than spending patterns in determining congressional election outcomes.

SPENDING PATTERNS IN CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS
1982 AND 1984

INTRODUCTION

The thesis of this paper is that money is indeed important for electoral success in congressional campaigns. This point is demonstrated by the ever increasing costs associated with campaigning in each new election. In conjunction with rising campaign costs, we have seen the traditional party structures, used in the past to elect candidates, give way to a corps of professional campaign consultants, mass media campaigning, and sophisticated campaign technologies -- a growing industry requiring significant infusions of cash.

Clearly, money alone does not insure victory at the polls, but rather, the lack of sufficient funding or the ineffective use of campaign funds prohibits the electability of some congressional candidates. Funding is one of many resources needed by successful candidates, but it is a very powerful one. Without sufficient amounts of money, political campaigns may not be able to do all of the things necessary to position their candidates for victory. For challengers lacking name recognition, money is the crucial resource that makes it possible for them to compete effectively with their better known opponents.

The arguments presented here bear strong implications for our system of representative democracy. Certainly the most intriguing question deals with whether campaign contributors have better access to congressmen or an enhanced position in lobbying for friendly legislation than non-contributing constituents. Another question concerns the role of contributors from outside the district: Should these individuals benefit from representation by a congressman for whom they cannot vote? This situation clearly conflicts with the underlying intention in the Constitution for using single-member districts to elect the House membership. Finally, because groups can raise larger campaign contributions than most individuals, do their members gain more access to congressmen as a result of their organization's substantial donations? The list of implications is limitless and beyond the scope of this study.

This paper will focus on campaign spending patterns by contenders in congressional races. The purpose here is to determine how budgeting decisions have an impact on getting elected to Congress. Special attention will be paid to campaign spending for opinion polling and advertising. The intention here is to provide a base for future research that would lead to further refinement of current campaign management practices in the budgeting area and thereby improve the competitiveness of congressional elections.

The first chapter will review the field of literature, emphasizing studies of the general trends in congressional

elections. Specifically, this chapter will look at the election studies inquiring into the impact of incumbency and the "surge and decline" effect of presidential elections on congressional elections. The second chapter will provide an overview of current campaign technologies, how they are used in a modern political campaign, and how much they cost. The third chapter will focus on studies of the role of money in congressional elections. This chapter will begin with an overview of general spending patterns in elections followed by a discussion of spending patterns within campaign structures. Special attention will be paid to a study by Goldenberg and Traugott inquiring into the internal budgetary patterns of congressional campaigns. The fourth chapter will discuss the research methodology and present the findings. This chapter will examine a group of competitive congressional races from the 1982 and 1984 elections. The financial information on these races will be taken from the reports they submitted to the Federal Election Commission. The findings will demonstrate how these campaigns budget their funds over time. Finally, the conclusions of this thesis will be presented in the in the fifth chapter.

CHAPTER I

CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS: AN OVERVIEW

Before beginning an analysis of money in politics we will examine congressional elections in their broader terms looking at the various aspects of races scholars believe have an impact on election outcome. All candidates do not enter the political arena under the same circumstances. Candidates differ in their party affiliation, professional background, political experience, philosophy, and level of talent. Candidates sometimes win or lose due to circumstances beyond their control or the control of their opponents. In this chapter we will review the features of elections -- other than campaign spending -- which determine who will serve in Congress. We will look specifically at the impact of incumbency, party affiliation, presidential coattails, and fluctuations in the economy, factors that have received considerable attention by scholars as explanatory variables in congressional election outcome. After examining these factors, we will have a framework for weighing the relative importance of campaign spending on election outcome.

THE ROLE OF INCUMBENCY

Most scholars agree that elections for the U. S. House of Representatives are not very competitive. The oft-cited measure used to describe this phenomena is the high reelection rates of incumbent congressmen. In the period from 1946 to the present, incumbents seeking reelection have won better than 79.3 percent of the time and in many election years, better than 90 percent.¹ Table 1-1 lists incumbent reelection rates from 1946 through 1982 as provided by a study by Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein. In 1986, a record 98.4 percent of the incumbents running for reelection returned to Congress.² The overwhelming advantage incumbents have in getting reelected to the House of Representatives is by far the most preponderant and most studied aspect of congressional elections.

Mayhew observed this phenomena by looking at the declining number of marginal congressional districts in the country.³ Marginal (or competitive) House districts are defined as districts where the incumbent won in the last election with not more than a 55 percent share of the vote.⁴ As Table 1-2 demonstrates, the number of marginal seats has steadily declined since 1956 suggesting that fewer districts have seen competitive races in recent years. Mayhew's point is that incumbents not only win more often than challengers, but -- on average -- they win by increasingly larger margins as well.

TABLE 1-1

HOUSE INCUMBENTS REELECTED, 1946 - 1980

Year	Number of Incumbents Seeking Reelection	Percentage of Incumbents Seeking Reelection Who Won
1946	328	82.4
1948	317	79.3
1950	362	90.5
1952	354	91.0
1954	379	93.1
1956	389	94.6
1958	356	89.9
1960	375	92.6
1962	368	91.5
1964	344	86.6
1966	362	88.1
1968	396	96.8
1970	379	94.5
1972	365	93.6
1974	343	87.7
1976	368	95.8
1978	358	93.7
1980	361	90.7
1982	432	90.1

SOURCE: The American Elections of 1982, ed., Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1983), p. 164-165.

TABLE 1-2

DECLINE OF MARGINAL HOUSE RACES 1956-1980

Year	Number of Incumbents Running General Election	Percentage of Incumbents Reelected with at Least 60 Percent of the Major Party Vote
1956	403	59.1
1958	390	63.1
1960	400	58.9
1962	376	63.6
1964	388	58.5
1966	401	67.7
1968	397	72.2
1970	389	77.3
1972	373	77.8
1974	383	66.4
1976	381	71.9
1978	377	78.0
1980	392	72.9
AVERAGE		68.3

SOURCE: Vital Statistics on Congress, 1982, ed., Norman J. Ornstein, Thomas E. Mann, Michael J. Malbin and John F. Bibby (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1982), p. 50.

The advantage of incumbency is by no means unique to candidates running for the House. By using linear and multiple regression techniques to analyze election returns for the U.S. Senate, Kostroski found that over a twelve year period, incumbent Senators became two percent safer with each new election.⁵ When compared to party strength indices, Kostroski concluded that incumbency has become more important in determining election outcome than candidate party. Furthermore, he found that in only a few states where strong party competition remains, are there instances where Senate incumbency rates remain low.

Cover and Mayhew have been able to measure what the incumbency advantage means in real votes by examining two key election campaigns during an incumbent's political career.⁶ In the first instance, when an incumbent is running for reelection for the first time, he is expected to do better than when running as a challenger. In fact, an increase in votes (from 1.6 to 7.5 percent) is regularly observed and is often referred to as the "sophomore surge." In the second instance, Cover and Mayhew examine what happens to an incumbent's successor nominee after the incumbent chooses to retire. As expected, the successor usually does not do as well. This observed reduction in vote, referred to as the "retirement slump," varies from 1.4 to 11.0 percent and provides a very real measurement of the value of incumbency. Table 1-3 depicts both measurements from 1962 through 1978.

As a long-time observer of Congress and the incumbency advantage, Mayhew developed a behavioral model describing many of

TABLE 1-3

SOPHOMORE SURGE AND RETIREMENT SLUMP FOR HOUSE MEMBERS

1962 - 1978

Year	Mean Sophomore Surge (Adjusted)	N	Mean Retirement Slump (Adjusted)	N
1962	+2.1%	46	-1.4%	17
1964	+1.6	54	-1.4	25
1966	+3.3	69	-4.7	13
1968	+6.5	54	-7.6	19
1970	+6.7	31	-6.6	36
1972	+7.5	43	-11.0	27
1974	+5.8	57	-6.7	44
1976	+6.8	87	-6.0	41
1978	+7.2	51	-8.9	42

SOURCE: Albert D. Cover and David R. Mayhew, "Congressional Dynamics and the Decline of Competitive Congressional Elections," in Congress Reconsidered, Second Edition, ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1981), p. 70.

the activities incumbents undertake to improve their electoral chances both while in Washington and in their home districts. Congressmen, he believes, are best described as "single-minded seekers of reelection."⁷ Furthermore, the institution of Congress, Mayhew argues, is designed remarkably well for meeting the electoral requirements of its members. Because the satisfaction of electoral needs is not viewed by members as a zero-sum situation, we have seen a growth over the years in the number of institutional support systems that assist incumbents in their reelection efforts including: larger congressional staffs, more franked mailing privileges, and larger travel budgets for trips back to the home district.⁸ Because these services are also performed by election campaigns, they can be used to displace some of the costs of campaigning. As a result, potential challengers who cannot meet this initial cost of entry into the political arena are eliminated from serious competition or choose not to run.

Obviously, congressmen have other goals than reelection, but by focusing on this particular aspect of Congress, Mayhew created a framework for further study. His view is a clear departure from the direction taken by much of the research until that time which employed party models to describe electoral patterns in the United States. Mayhew points out that the old party politics approach to analyzing elections more aptly describes the style of campaigning used in Europe, rather than in the U.S. House where party structures are relatively weak. Consequently, the significance of

this new viewpoint is two-fold: first, the spotlight is put on the person running for office rather than the party and second, the model tends to explain incumbent reelection rates rather well.

Building on Mayhew's model of incumbent behavior and the institutionalization of reelection structures, other theories have been proposed to explain the incumbency effect. Tufte argues that because incumbents are able to help set the boundaries of congressional districts through redistricting, they use this power to fortify their own electoral chances.⁹ Tufte's attempt to demonstrate a causal relationship between incumbency and electability is weak at best since state legislatures and the federal courts also play significant roles in the redistricting process. Furthermore, Ferejohn found the decline in congressional competition is not specific to redrawn districts, rather this phenomena has taken place evenly across district boundaries.¹⁰ Therefore, Tufte's emphasis on redistricting explains how the incumbency effect works in only a very few cases.

The line of inquiry followed by most scholars emphasizes the electoral advantages associated with simply holding office. Abramowitz tests two competing hypotheses explaining why voters react favorably to incumbent congressmen.¹¹ The first hypothesis, called the familiarity hypothesis, states simply that voters prefer incumbents because they are more likely to know an incumbent's name than the name of a challenger. This viewpoint suggests that in low-stimulus elections, such as midterm congressional races, any information at all predisposes voters

toward a candidate. The second hypothesis, called the reputation hypothesis, states that voter satisfaction with an incumbent's past performance, rather than simple name identification, determines how much value a congressman derives from incumbency. Abramowitz uses survey research to test these arguments and finds that the reputation hypothesis better reflects reality. Visibility, he points out, is necessary for a congressman to establish a reputation, but visibility alone does not insure popularity. Abramowitz concludes that "a congressman must cultivate his constituency to turn incumbency into an advantage."¹²

In a related study, Fiorina examines several cases where congressmen were able to cultivate their constituencies and strengthen their electoral chances by using the advantages of larger congressional staffs and by spending more time in the home district than their predecessors.¹³ This phenomena, Fiorina argues, has taken place in conjunction with the growth of the federal bureaucracy. With more federal programs being implemented in the hinterlands, congressmen have been willing to take the role of an administrator or ombudsman of these operations in their home districts. By doing this, they are both advertising themselves and taking credit for these programs. Fiorina suggests that the current breed of congressman often takes the view that it is "better to be reelected as an errand boy than not be reelected at all."¹⁴ In a follow-up study, Fenno found support for Fiorina's analysis concluding that levels of congressional activity (work

habits, travel, etc.) are affected by the way congressmen perceive their constituencies and their own vulnerabilities.¹⁵

Borrowing from consumer research studies, Parker examines how the institutional support provided to incumbents is used to transform specific voter behavior.¹⁶ After polling voters from 1964 through 1976, Parker found that unlike contests for president or U.S. Senate, congressional races tend to be "low information" contests. Few voters (from 18.8 to 43.9 percent) pay "a good deal of attention" to the activities of Congress. Because voter interest in congressional races tends to be low, Parker argues that voters are willing to rely on "subsidized" information sources such as congressional franked mail, rather than newspaper reports. Although this information is inherently biased, Parker points out that voters readily make this compromise because the perceived costs associated with making an incorrect voting decision in a congressional race are insignificant.

The chief implication of Parker's research is that congressmen have a great deal of control over their electoral success because of their high level of control over the dissemination of information regarding themselves and their elections. Parker concludes that the electoral advantage of incumbents is a function of their ability to "focus constituent attention on aspects of their job performance, or characteristics related to job performance, that produces favorable impressions of their overall performance."¹⁷ Conversely, the ability of challengers to win in congressional elections may be a function of

their ability to increase public awareness of their candidacy or to publicize their opponent's failures.

Building on this belief that congressmen exert substantial influence on voter perceptions, Payne and later Yiannakis explore how communication style varies with incumbent electability. Using a case study approach, Payne examines how congressional behavior has changed since the elections of 1936.¹⁸ Payne concludes that the current generation of congressmen, who are successful in building a personal electoral base, tend to be ambitious, publicity oriented types whereas many of their counterparts a generation earlier tended to shy away from such activities. Whether this phenomena has come about because of the rise of mass media, Payne is not willing to speculate.

In a more recent study, Yiannakis argues that communication style tends to vary with the type of district being represented.¹⁹ Yiannakis uses a content analysis approach looking at the newsletters and press releases sent by congressmen to their home districts. Borrowing her classification scheme from Mayhew, Yiannakis notes a tendency among "city machine" representatives to adopt a credit claiming style while congressmen from upper middle class, suburban districts use a nationally oriented, position-taking style. In either case, the congressman's communication style reflects his perception of his constituents' needs. Yiannakis explains that in the poorer urban districts, congressmen are reelected on their ability to bring home their share of federal programs and when this occurs, the congressmen of

these districts will advertise their role in providing these services. Yiannakis assumes that the constituents of upper middle class districts, on the other hand, are repelled by the concept of material gain from political involvement. Congressmen from these districts will attempt to depict themselves as statesmen by taking positions on a wide range of political issues, rather than emphasizing their involvement in pork-barrel politics. In either case, the incumbent congressman attempts to focus his message -- as Parker discussed earlier -- on the aspects of his performance that produces favorable impressions of his overall performance. The significance of Yiannakis' findings is that it demonstrates how well incumbents can adapt and alter their communication style to cultivate future votes and fortify their probability of reelection.

SURGE AND DECLINE: THE EFFECTS OF PARTY, PRESIDENTIAL COATTAILS, AND THE ECONOMY

Although incumbency is by far the most studied aspect of congressional elections, it is by no means the exclusive determinant of election outcome. Party, presidential coattails, and the state of the economy are factors affecting congressional elections that have received considerable attention. Because these three variables are closely related, they are examined here together. The linkage between party and presidential coattails is readily seen. Because a presidential candidate is considered the leader of his party, his personal electoral success may affect the chances of the congressional and senatorial candidates running

under his party banner. The linkage between the president/party factors and the state of the economy, on the other hand, is less obvious stemming from the common perception among voters that economic fluctuations are a function of presidential policy. Voters, it is argued, may reward or punish an incumbent president and the other candidates in his party depending on how well his particular economic programs are working. Much research -- usually taking the form of aggregate election studies -- has been devoted to determining whether these logical arguments reflect reality.

As expected, a relationship exists between presidential and congressional election outcomes. Successful presidential candidates tend to bring a few congressional candidates -- usually from marginal districts -- into office with them suggesting that some party-line voting does take place.²⁰ A more intriguing aspect of this relationship, however, is that the president's party nearly always loses congressional seats during the subsequent midterm elections. Because these two phenomena have become normal aspects of congressional elections, one scholar was prompted to refer to them jointly as the "surge and decline" effect.²¹ The following discussion examines the research inquiring into this phenomena beginning with the "surge" aspect of congressional elections.

Presidential Elections and Congressional Surge

The surge aspect of congressional elections has been long examined by scholars. Although, the term "surge" appropriately describes how the winning presidential candidate brings a surge of new congressmen to office, it also accurately depicts what happens to voter turnout in these election years. Table 1-4 describes voter turnout for federal elections from 1930 to 1980 showing high voter participation levels for presidential elections. On average, voter turnout for presidential elections exceeds turnout for midterm congressional races by better than ten percent. Furthermore, a fall-off is seen between turnout in presidential and congressional races held during the same year. This phenomena has two implications. First, because voters are most interested in voting for president, the strength of a party's presidential candidate may have a significant effect on congressional elections. Second, because the presidential elections attract many new voters, the constitution of the congressional electorate changes significantly with each new election.²² Successful congressional candidates, therefore, must be able to read and react to these changes in a manner that will position them for victory.

Although the data in Table 1-4 suggests a surge in overall turnout, Key found that turnout surges take an asymmetrical form where strong increases in vote for one party are seldom met by reciprocal surges for the other party.²³ Key's observation

TABLE 1-4

TURNOUT IN PRESIDENTIAL AND HOUSE ELECTIONS, 1930 - 1980
(Percentage of Voting Age Population)

Year	Presidential Elections	House Elections
1930	--	33.7
1932	52.4	49.7
1934	--	41.4
1936	56.9	53.5
1938	--	44.0
1940	58.9	55.4
1942	--	32.5
1944	56.0	52.7
1946	--	37.1
1948	51.1	48.1
1950	--	41.1
1952	61.6	57.6
1954	--	41.7
1956	59.3	55.9
1958	--	43.0
1960	62.6	58.5
1962	--	45.4
1964	61.9	57.8
1966	--	45.4
1968	60.9	55.1
1970	--	43.5
1972	55.4	50.9
1974	--	36.1
1976	54.4	49.5
1978	--	35.1
1980	53.4	48.1
AVERAGE	57.3	46.6

SOURCE: Vital Statistics on Congress, 1982, ed., Norman J. Ornstein, Thomas E. Mann, Michael J. Malbin and John F. Bibby (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1982), p. 37.

supports the implications mentioned above that election year and the strength of presidential candidates are very important factors affecting congressional election outcome. Key offers the following explanation:

The simultaneous election of the President and of all House members enables the electorate to place control of these two organs of government in one or the other of the major parties. Furthermore, it permits, although it does not assure, a maximum unification of party campaign effort behind both presidential and congressional candidates and subjects more races for Representative to the²⁴ influences that play upon presidential voting.

Key, however, is quick to point out that coattails and party voting do not explain electoral success in every case. During the 1940's and 1950's, as many as 100 southern congressional districts were safe for the Democrats. Key suggests that districts where the vote is normally very close (marginal seats) are most apt to swing from party to party with the presidential vote.²⁵

Since Key, several studies have been introduced explaining the significance of presidential elections on congressional races. Most of the recent research has emphasized how presidential coattails have become less significant or nonexistent as a factor influencing congressional election outcomes. One such study by Edwards, examines the relationship between how well a president runs in a congressional district as compared to the success of his party's congressional candidate.²⁶ By looking at election data for six presidential races, Edwards found increasing instances where congressional candidates ran ahead of their party's successful presidential candidate. These findings are supported

by the fact that voters are exercising their option of split-ticket voting more often than in the past. Table 1-5 shows that the number of districts carried by the presidential candidate of one party and a congressional candidate of another party has steadily increased since 1900. Edwards concludes that the coattails effect is less important to congressional election outcomes probably because congressional incumbency has come to mean much more for voters.

In a related study, Kritzer and Eubank examine how incumbency factors and the declining role of coattails affect the performance of specific parties in congressional elections.²⁷ Until very recently, they argue, winning the presidency usually meant winning a majority of seats in the House of Representatives as well. The Republican Party, however, has won several presidencies in recent years, but failed for the most part to win a majority in the House. Kritzer and Eubank polled voters to determine why this trend is taking place. They found that with each national electoral swing, each party suffers a similar dropout rate from presidential voters identified as party loyalists when the national trend is against them. The "recapture" rate, however, among Democrats deserting the Democratic presidential candidate, is higher than among Republican deserters. Kritzer and Eubank found that of the Democratic voters deserting the presidential candidate, 58.9 percent voted for the Democratic congressional candidate. Only 40.9 percent of the Republican voters who deserted the Republican presidential candidate returned to vote

TABLE 1-5
TICKET SPLITTING BETWEEN PRESIDENTIAL AND HOUSE CANDIDATES,
1900 - 1980

Year	Districts ^a	Districts with Split Results ^b	
		Number	Percentage
1900	295	10	3.4
1904	310	5	1.6
1908	314	21	6.7
1912	333	84	25.2
1916	333	35	10.5
1920	344	11	3.2
1924	356	42	11.8
1928	359	68	18.9
1932	355	50	14.1
1936	361	51	14.1
1940	362	53	14.6
1944	367	41	11.2
1948	422	90	21.3
1952	435	84	19.3
1956	435	130	29.9
1960	437	114	26.1
1964	435	145	33.3
1968	435	139	32.0
1972	435	192	44.1
1976	435	124	28.5
1980	435	143	32.8

SOURCE: Albert D. Cover and David R. Mayhew, "Congressional Dynamics and the Decline of Competitive Congressional Elections," in Congress Reconsidered, Second Edition, ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1981), p. 53.

a. Complete data on every congressional district not available before 1952.

b. Congressional districts carried by a congressional candidate of one party and a presidential candidate of another party.

for the Republican congressional candidate. Whether this phenomenon takes place because more current incumbents are Democrats and incumbency has become a more significant cue for voters in recent years, they were not willing to say. Kritzer and Eubank concluded, however, that party identification among voters has a subtle impact on congressional election outcomes favoring Democratic candidates.

Midterm Decline

It was mentioned that midterm congressional races are characterized by the term "decline." Like the surge aspect of presidential elections, the "decline" characteristics of midterm congressional elections are reflected by a decline in voter turnout but more importantly, by a decline in the number of seats represented by the President's party. Table 1-6 presents the losses by the President's party in midterm elections from 1862 to 1982. On average, the President loses 36 congressional seats with each midterm election. This systematic pattern of American voting has given rise to a lively discussion among political scientists.

The initial theory used by scholars to explain midterm election patterns, commonly referred to as the "responsible parties" model of government, states simply that because presidential coattails are not present in midterm elections, the public is able to pass judgement on the legislative record of the parties when they vote for Congress. This view has come under

TABLE 1-6

LOSSES BY PRESIDENT'S PARTY IN MIDTERM ELECTIONS, 1861 - 1982

Year	Party Holding Presidency	President's Party Gain/Loss of Seats in House
1862	R	-3
1866	R	-2
1870	R	-31
1874	R	-96
1878	R	-9
1882	R	-33
1886	D	-12
1890	R	-85
1894	D	-116
1898	R	-21
1902	R	9 ^a
1906	R	-28
1910	R	-57
1914	D	-59
1918	D	-19
1922	R	-75
1926	R	-10
1930	R	-49
1934	D	9
1938	D	-71
1942	D	-55
1946	D	-55
1950	D	-29
1954	R	-18
1958	R	-48
1962	D	-4
1966	D	-47
1970	R	-12
1974	R	-48
1978	D	-15
1982	R	-26
AVERAGE		-36

SOURCE: The American Elections of 1982, ed., Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1983), p. 154.

a. Although the Republicans gained nine seats, they actually lost ground to the Democrats who gained 25 seats after the increase in the overall number of representatives from the 1900 census.

attack most notably by Stokes and Miller.²⁸ They argue that unlike the cohesive parties of European countries where the responsible parties approach explains electoral patterns fairly well, American party cohesion is eroded by a "cacophony of blocs and individuals fulfilling their own definitions of the public good."²⁹ In support of their argument, Stokes and Miller found, after polling voters, that the public's awareness of the legislative record of each party is minimal. Consequently, the responsible parties model explains very little about American elections.

The view long held by politicians and journalists -- and until recently, ignored by many political scientists -- focuses attention on the performance of the President as the leader of his party. In this revision of the responsible parties model, midterm elections are considered referenda on the performance of the President and especially on his economic programs. Tufte points out that the economy during midterm election years is almost always in worse condition than during presidential election years.³⁰ A consequence of this fact is that the President nearly always loses congressional seats because the voters are voicing their disapproval. In his study, Tufte compares aggregate election data with economic data and Gallup Approval Ratings to inquire into the relationship between the economy, voter approval of the President and midterm election outcomes. Tufte found a strong relationship between these three factors with the approval indices and aggregate election outcomes showing the strongest

congruency. In fact, Tufte argues, a 10 percent change in the Gallup Approval Ratings will reflect a 1.3 percent change in the aggregate midterm vote for the President's party in the House. Unfortunately, Tufte's results do not indicate how this relationship translates into changes in actual House seats.

Since Tufte, several attempts have been made to use econometric methods to measure the impact of short-term economic fluctuations on the gains and losses of the President's party in the House. Kramer uses multiple regression techniques to examine the impact of several economic factors as well as incumbency and coattail effects for elections from 1896 through 1964.³¹ In doing so, he attempts to pull together most of the previous research dealing with only one of these factors. He concludes that economic fluctuations have an impact on congressional elections, that economic upturns benefit candidates of the incumbent President's party and that downturns help the opposition. Furthermore, election outcomes, he concludes, are in substantial part responsive to objective economic changes occurring under the incumbent party. Specifically, Kramer found that a 10 percent decrease in per capita income would cost the incumbent administration 4 to 5 percent of the aggregate congressional vote. Real income, he found, is the most important factor because with real income held constant, changes in unemployment or in inflation have no significant independent effects on voting as scholars had earlier believed.³²

After examining similar data from 1896 through 1970, Bloom and Price modified Kramer's initial model concluding that the impact of economic factors is actually assymmetrical with respect to aggregate election outcomes for the House.³³ Although economic downturns indeed have a pronounced effect on the vote for the President's party, they found no corresponding effect for economic upturns. These findings, they point out, are true regardless of party and over a broad range of economic conditions. Furthermore, they found a lagging effect in the data where voters tend to consider the state of the economy from the preceeding year, rather than economic conditions occurring during the midterm election year.

Although these two studies explain how economic policy may affect aggregate national voting patterns, they do not tell us anything about how economic factors affect individual seats. A recent study by Owens and Olson attempts to do just that.³⁴ Owens and Olson examine data on 429 congressional elections from 1972 through 1976 in states where good party data is available. They failed to prove at this level, however, whether voters either reward or punish the party in power due to their economic policies. Owens and Olson concluded that in this microeconomic context, the answer may lie in voter's perceptions of their own economic situation, rather than in their actual economic condition.

Mann also attempts to rationalize the difference between aggregate election patterns and election outcomes in individual

congressional districts.³⁵ Taking the view that party and national tides are woefully inadequate for explaining voters' choices, Mann opts to poll voters' impressions of candidates on a district by district basis. He found that larger numbers of voters have impressions of the candidates than previous research had indicated and that these impressions reflected the dialogue of the campaigns. Furthermore, he found candidate preference measurements explain a significant amount of the electoral variation in each district. Mann concluded that candidates are becoming more responsible for their own successes, rather than being at the mercy of national trends. The relationship between aggregate voting patterns and voting results in individual districts, however, remains to be fully explored.

SUMMARY

The thrust of current congressional election theory relies on the impact of incumbency to explain most electoral patterns. It has been argued that the advantages incumbents enjoy can be traced to some very real characteristics of holding office including: better name recognition, subsidized office support, and an increased inclination among voters to choose incumbents. Furthermore, it has been argued that incumbents have become more effective in employing these advantages for electoral purposes. Clearly, the advantage of incumbency is a significant factor affecting election outcomes -- especially for congressional races

where the reelection rate of these candidates approach 90 percent. A major implication for our system of representative democracy resulting from this apparent low level of competition is the loss of electoral insecurity on the part of incumbents in safe seats. Without the fear of losing an election, it is possible that the accountability of incumbents to the voters may become eroded. There is very little evidence, however, to support whether this has happened.

In an attempt to reconcile the impact of incumbency and the "surge and decline" effect on congressional elections Jacobson and Kernell have fashioned their own theory.³⁶ In short, Jacobson and Kernell suggest that political candidates pursue predictable electoral careers where decisions to advance to a higher office are based on a candidate's estimation of his own electoral chances. Being risk averse by nature, quality candidates will seldom venture into elections where they have less than a probable chance of victory. Consequently, quality candidates, candidates having the characteristics necessary for victory, seldom run against incumbents or in election years where the "surge and decline" effect may overwhelm them. As a result, the power of incumbency and the inevitability of the "surge and decline" effect become self-fulfilled prophecies.

A matter receiving little attention, but equally intriguing is the characteristics of successful challengers. Nearly a third of the members of the Ninety-Seventh Congress earned their seats by defeating incumbents.³⁷ This figure is surprisingly high,

given the arguments presented above. Exploring the common characteristics of these candidates may lead to a better understanding of the factors causing success at the polls. To date, however, there are no major studies published inquiring into the reasons for the success of these candidates.³⁸

The other major factors affecting congressional election patterns include: party affiliation, presidential elections, and the state of the economy. Research indicates that these three interrelated variables may explain the aggregate election phenomenon of "surge and decline." When examined on a district by district basis, however, these factors fail to predict who will win in a particular congressional district. Consequently, we must explore the impact of campaign technology and campaign spending on election outcomes as possible factors explaining this gap in congressional election theory. In the next chapter, we will review the uses of the new technologies employed by the modern congressional campaigns including: radio and television, opinion polling, and direct mail and telephone campaigning.

NOTES

¹Vital Statistics on Congress, 1986, ed., Norman J. Ornstein, Thomas E. Mann, Michael J. Malbin and John F. Bibby (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1986), pp. .

²The New York Times July 15, 1987, p. 1.

³David R. Mayhew, "Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals," Polity 6:298-301, 1974.

⁴Albert D. Cover and David R. Mayhew, "Congressional Dynamics and the Decline of Competitive Congressional Elections," in Congress Reconsidered, Second Edition, ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1981), pp. 62-82. Cover and Mayhew point out that the decline in marginality takes place regardless of what definition one chooses for marginality. Winning by less than 55 or 60 percent of the vote are the customary choices.

⁵Warren Lee Kostroski, "Party and Incumbency in Postwar Senate Elections: Trends, Patterns and Models," American Political Science Review 67:1213-1234, 1973.

⁶Cover, op. cit., p. 69.

⁷David R. Mayhew, Congress: The Electoral Connection (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 5.

⁸Ibid., pp. 81-82.

⁹Edward R. Tufte, "The Relationship Between Seats and Votes in Two-Party Systems," American Political Science Review 67:531-546, 1973.

¹⁰John A. Ferejohn, "On the Decline of Competition in Congressional Elections," American Political Science Review 71:166-176, 1977.

¹¹Alan I. Abramowitz, "Name Familiarity, Reputation, and the Incumbency Effect in a Congressional Election," Western Political Quarterly 28:668-684.

¹²Ibid., p. 684.

¹³ Morris P. Fiorina, "The Case of the Vanishing Marginals: The Bureaucracy Did It," American Political Science Review 71:177-181, 1977.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁵ Richard F. Fenno, Jr., "U.S. House Members and Their Constituencies: an Exploration," American Political Science Review 71:883-917, 1977.

¹⁶ Glen R. Parker, "The Advantage of Incumbency in House Elections," American Politics Quarterly 8:449-464, 1980.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 450.

¹⁸ James L. Payne, "The Personal Electoral Advantage of House Incumbents, 1936-1976," American Politics Quarterly 8:465-482, 1980.

¹⁹ Diana Evans Yiannakis, "House Members' Communication Styles: Newsletter and Press Releases," Journal of Politics 44:1049-1071, 1982.

²⁰ V. O. Key, Jr., Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups, Fourth Edition, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1958), p. 603. Key presents a graph showing the Democratic percentage of the two-party national vote for President and the percentage of Democratic House seats for 1900 - 1956. In every year except 1928, a presidential victory was accompanied by gains in the House by the president's party.

²¹ Angus Campbell, "Surge and Decline: A Study of Electoral Change," in Elections and the Political Order, Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller and Donald Stokes, eds. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966).

²² Campbell, Ibid., p. 42-43. Campbell, who first coined the term "surge and decline" suggests that a group of highly motivated "core voters" will vote in every election. They are joined by additional "peripheral voters", who have less political interest, in high-stimulus (presidential) elections. The turnout in any election, he contends, is largely a question of how many of the less interested, less responsive people are sufficiently stimulated by the political circumstances of the moment to make the effort to vote.

²³ Key, Ibid., p. 638.

²⁴ Key, Ibid., p. 603.

²⁵ Key, Ibid., p. 605.

²⁶George C. Edwards, III, "The Impact of Presidential Coattails on Outcomes of Congressional Elections," American Politics Quarterly 7:94-108.

²⁷Herbert M. Kritzer and Robert B. Eubank, "Presidential Coattails Revisited: Partisanship and Incumbency Effects," American Journal of Political Science 23:615-626.

²⁸Donald E. Stokes and Warren E. Miller, "Party Government and the Saliency of Congress," in Elections and the Political Order, Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, eds., (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966), p.194-211.

²⁹Ibid., p. 209.

³⁰Edward R. Tufte, "Determinants of the Outcomes of Midterm Congressional Elections," American Political Science Review 69:812-826.

³¹Gerald H. Kramer, "Short-Term Fluctuations in U.S. Voting Behavior, 1896 - 1964," American Political Science Review 65:131-143.

³²Ibid., p. 141.

³³Howard S. Bloom and H. Douglas Price, "Voter Response to Short-Run Economic Conditions: the Assymetric Effect of Prosperity and Recession," American Political Science Review 67:1240-1254.

³⁴John R. Owens and Edward C. Olson, "Economic Fluctuations and Congressional Elections," American Journal of Political Science 24:469-493.

³⁵Thomas E. Mann, Unsafe at Any Margin: Interpreting Congressional Elections, (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1978).

³⁶Gary C. Jacobson and Samuel Kernell, Strategy and Choice in Congressional Elections (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

³⁷Vital Statistics on Congress, 1982, op. cit., p. 52. The breakdown is as follows: 142 members defeated incumbents to earn their seats (32.6 percent of the House), 75 are Democrats, 67 are Republicans, 25.5 percent won in general elections, 7.1 percent won in primaries.

³⁸An interesting study by Huckshorn and Spencer, however, examines the common characteristics of congressional losers. See: Robert J. Huckshorn and Robert C. Spencer, The Politics of Defeat: Campaigning for Congress, (Boston: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1971).

CHAPTER II

CAMPAIGN TECHNOLOGY AND STRATEGY

The surge of television advertising in elections in recent years demonstrates how political campaigns are willing to accept new technologies which may give them an edge in achieving success. Although the term technology often implies the use of some new instrument or tool, technology also means the use of better management skills. Since the advent of television campaigning, campaign management has become increasingly professional at every federal level.¹ This is due in part to the need for technical expertise for managing the new technologies, but also because increasing federal regulation of elections is forcing candidates to better manage their campaigns.² Consequently, professional consultants and campaign managers are becoming more widely used by campaigns at every federal level than ever before. Currently, it is estimated that 20 percent of the average campaign budget is spent on consultant fees and expenses.³

In this section, we will describe some of these technologies and discuss how campaign professionals employ them in basic campaign strategy. We will address three specific technologies: electronic media (television and radio), research (polling), direct mail, and telephone solicitation. Much has already been said about the widespread use of paid broadcasting in political campaigns. Television and radio allow political candidates to reach a much broader audience with a more precise message than in any previous era. Opinion polling is the tool which indicates to the campaign what the message should be, whether the message is being received by the targeted audience, and whether the message will motivate the audience to perform as required on election day. Direct mail and telephone banks, on the other hand, are campaign tools used both as a medium for the campaign message and as fundraising techniques. These four interrelated technologies are powerful tools when used effectively, and together they have brought dramatic change to the art of modern political campaigning.

TELEVISION AND RADIO

The primary purpose for using television and radio in a campaign, of course, is to contact the voters with the campaign message.⁴ The similarities between motivating an audience through television to buy a product or vote for a candidate have been well established by past media campaigns. To a media consultant, a political campaign can be viewed as a one-time, one-day sale for a

marketable product (the candidate). Consequently, much of what is known about the impact of radio and television advertising on the public has come as a result of advertising by business for consumer products. Since Eisenhower's first election, however, a field of media consultants specializing in politics has taken the fundamental advertising principles used in business and applied them successfully to political campaign advertising. Although these consultants vary in their style, understanding of the media, fees, and strategies, several similarities run through the industry.⁵

Cost structures for media services vary with each particular consultant, however, media professionals derive their costs for providing two basic services to the campaign: the creative costs associated with the production of the spot (political commercial) and the costs associated with developing a media schedule and purchasing the air time.⁶ Costs associated with scheduling the spots, referred to as the time-buy, are standard throughout the consulting industry. The actual cost of the time-buy, which is the bulk of any campaign media budget, is based on the audience reach attained by the campaign spots and varies with each media market. The media consultant is paid a commission (usually 15 percent of the total time-buy).⁷ Creative and production costs vary with each consultant depending on the demand and past success rate of a particular media consultant. Production costs for a 30 second spot range from \$5,000 to \$100,000 depending on the producer and quality of the work.⁸

Diamond and Bates provide a comprehensive view of how broadcast campaigning has evolved over the past 30 years by looking at elections at every level.⁹ Although they devote much attention to the style of different media campaigns, they observed many similarities between campaign strategies and have developed a four-stage model describing a "typical" campaign media strategy.¹⁰ In this typical strategy, each media campaign attempts to educate the electorate regarding their candidate, the issues, and their opponent. It is a step-by-step process where each subsequent phase builds on the message presented in the previous steps. Although each phase represents a chronological step in the campaign process, each period may vary in time length or the number of spots they contain.

The first phase, the ID spot, aims to establish a foundation to build subsequent information. In its simplest form, the ID spot establishes basic name recognition for the candidate and may attempt to relate some favorable aspect of the candidate to the voters. It is common to see ads in this phase repeating the candidate's name several times to build this name recognition. One ID spot format which has become a standard in the industry builds on the mispronunciation of the candidate's name. This type of ad is best illustrated by the ID spots used by Paul Tsongas for his initial run for the Senate in Massachusetts. At the end of his ID spots, a little girl repeatedly mispronounced Tsongas's name thereby calling attention to the ads and building his name recognition as the candidate with the unusual name. Obviously,

the successful implementation of this phase is crucial for challengers with low name recognition.

Spots used in the first phase are usually very simple and to the point, but may also include other more complex messages. Diamond and Bates cite John Kennedy's ID spots as an example where Kennedy's name was repeated dozens of times, but where some attention was given to the issue of religion.¹¹ For incumbents, an attempt is usually made to incorporate the visible trappings of their office in the spots such as the Oval Office, Air Force One, or The Hot Line in the case of an incumbent presidential candidate. By doing this, they attempt to draw the voters' attention to their experience in office and thereby incorporate the incumbency bias into the election.

Phase two, the argument spot, employs a more complex message based on the foundation built in the first phase. In this stage reasons are given for voting for the candidate. As Diamond and Bates put it: "We have been told who the candidate is; now we are supposed to be told what the candidate stands for."¹² The content and style of these spots can range significantly but, after viewing 250 argument spots spanning over 30 years of campaigning, Diamond and Bates identified three common patterns of rhetoric. First, they found, argument spots seldom get specific. This may be true because the candidates are attempting to appeal to a wide audience. Second, these ads are designed to appeal to the emotions of the audience or, as Diamond and Bates put it, they are "hitting the hot buttons of the viewers."¹³ This aspect of the

argument spot is demonstrated by a variety of techniques. A common approach used for provoking an emotional response is to include the endorsement of a well-known public figure when presenting a specific argument. The third aspect Diamond and Bates found is that the argument spots make serious, issue-oriented points. Usually, only a single issue is discussed in each spot. An example of this type of advertisement is actress Mary Tyler Moore (known for portraying career woman Mary Richards) speaking for Jimmy Carter in 1980 as the candidate "truly concerned about women's freedom" because he was the only presidential candidate to support the ERA.¹⁴ In this instance, the spot is designed to appeal to a broad, but specific portion of the electorate: those favoring women's rights.

The third phase is referred to as "the attack" because it is characterized by negative advertising. Diamond and Bates note that "as soon as there were spots, there were attack spots." Eisenhower, they point out, used mild attack rhetoric at this stage of his first campaign when he referred to the Democrats as well intentioned but misguided busdrivers (where the federal government was likened to a bus).¹⁵ After the first two phases where the candidate has built name recognition and the voters have a sense of where he stands on the issues, the campaign then must give the voting audience the opportunity to draw a comparison between his opponent and himself. In many campaigns the attack spot provides the candidate with an instrument for questioning his opponent's qualifications or positions on the issues. In the

past, personal attacks have been used in this phase of the campaign but, in recent elections campaigns have relied on the use of surrogates to do the attacking. This is done to remove the burden of blame that may fall on the candidate if the voting audience reacts unfavorably to the attack spots. In 1976, for example, Gerald Ford made heavy, late use of some Georgia newspaper editorials opposed to Carter. In these ads, the newspapers served the function of campaign surrogate.

The final phase of the typical media campaign is used by each candidate to sum up or make a concluding statement about his candidacy. This phase is usually very short and positive in its rhetoric. New campaign messages are seldom introduced at this stage of the election, rather it is a time for the candidates to appear in thoughtful repose. In presidential campaigns, this phase has come to consist of a 30 or 60 minute election eve special offering "hoopla and Hollywood."¹⁶ Lower-level campaigns frequently return to positive spots at this stage of the election.

Although Diamond and Bates provide a basic model for understanding the content of a campaign media strategy, media consultants can fine-tune the intensity of their message by adjusting the timing pattern of their spots. Like much of the work done in advertising, the strategies used in this area of media management were developed originally for consumer sales. Media timing strategies, however, are most significant for our research because they can be measured by the direct media expenditures paid by the campaign to the advertising networks.

Consequently, particular campaign timing strategies may depend on the flow of funds into the campaign.

Several timing strategies can be pursued by adjusting two basic factors in the timing plan: the length of the campaign and the rate of spending throughout the campaign.¹⁷ The first factor, involves stretching or shrinking the time length of the total media campaign. Three variations can occur. The campaign can pursue a concentrated or "burst" strategy, where most of its media resources are spent in an abbreviated period. The purpose here is to maximize the reach of the campaign message to the voting public and avoid repetition to the same audience. This strategy is expected when a campaign has limited media resources and cannot compete in a full-length media campaign. As is the case in other areas of political campaigning, media campaigns have become longer rather than shorter -- often beginning in the Summer months -- and campaigns electing this approach may put themselves at a disadvantage. The second strategy, preferred by competitive campaigns to the concentrated approach, is the continuous strategy. In this approach, the campaign stretches its media resources over an extended period at a fairly constant rate of exposure. This strategy is preferred because it allows the campaign to educate the voters in a step-by-step process as Diamond and Bates suggest. The third strategy, the intermittent approach, differs remarkably from the other two because it incorporates periods when no spots are being shown at all during the campaign. This approach alternates brief periods when spots

are running on the air with periods when they are not. This allows the campaign to both stretch the duration of the campaign and maintain a high intensity rate. The danger of this method, however, stems from having periods of blank air space allowing the opposition the opportunity to speak without a response.

The second factor involves adjusting the rate of spending throughout the duration of the campaign. Four approaches have evolved. The first and simplest strategy is the level spending approach where the campaign spends its media funds at a stable rate throughout the campaign. In this situation, the intensity of the campaign's message remains stable as well. Second, a rising approach is used when the campaign increases its spending over time. This approach attempts to create a sense of momentum for the viewing public because it builds from a relatively low to a high intensity level. At its best, this approach can create a bandwagon effect for the successful campaign but is used often in situations where campaign funds are unavailable at the early stages of the election. Third, the falling approach is the reverse of the rising technique because spending levels begin at a high rate and end at a much lower level. This situation may be used in cases where the candidate has very low name recognition in the district and the campaign chooses to emphasize its ID spots early in the campaign. Finally, an alternating approach may be used where the intensity rate varies over the course of the campaign. In this instance, certain phases of the campaign or

certain campaign spots are given more emphasis depending on the strategy objectives of the campaign.

The only study of record dealing with the effectiveness of different media timing strategies for campaigns was performed by Hofstetter and Buss in 1980.¹⁸ They attempted to measure the impacts of a last-minute television blitz during the 1972 presidential election. By comparing polling data from 40 days prior and immediately after election day, they found that news programming had a larger impact on voting behavior than paid broadcasting. Susceptibility to last-minute television exposure seems to be a function of political involvement. For congressional races, where voter interest tends to be lower than presidential elections, last-minute broadcasting may encourage some reaction by the voting public.

OPINION POLLING

Accurate opinion polling is crucial for successful campaigns. When performed and interpreted properly, polls provide a blueprint for campaign planning and for developing the most effective campaign message. Polls can identify the voters' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of a candidate and of his opponent. After these aspects of the contest are identified, the campaign can employ a media plan to reinforce these perceptions within the voting public favoring their own candidate. Then, polling is used to identify subtle changes in voter attitude and to determine whether the media effort is achieving its objectives. Like the

use of television in campaigns, polling was developed initially as a tool for consumer marketing, but was adopted later by polling consultants (pollsters) specializing in political campaigns.

Sabato has identified five different types of surveys used in political campaigns today.¹⁹ Each type of poll is designed to achieve a specific purpose, but only major campaigns tend to have the resources available to use all five instruments. The initial poll, often conducted a year ahead of election day, is referred to as a "benchmark" or "baseline" poll. The purpose here is to identify the broadest issues at stake in the upcoming election and determine whether the candidate would run well under the prevailing circumstances. Projected "horse race" figures are estimated between the candidate and a number of potential opponents for the seat. At this stage of the election the benchmark poll allows the candidate to test the political waters and determine whether he should compete at all in this election. The sample size for this poll is large ranging from as many as 4000 respondents in a national poll to as few as 400 for a congressional district.

The second stage of polling, conducted after the initial phase but still a few months from election day, is referred to as "follow-up" surveys. The purpose here is to refine the campaign's initial understanding of the mood of the voters and determine a course for the upcoming media campaign. It is in this phase, if not previously done, that the campaign identifies its key themes and messages which will be presented in the upcoming media

campaign. At this stage of a general election, the campaign's opponent has been selected and a more thorough understanding of his political weaknesses -- as seen by the voters -- must be determined for the upcoming media attack. The sample size for follow-up surveys range in size from 500 to 600 interviews. Two or more surveys are conducted depending on the events arising during the campaign.²⁰

The third type of poll, the panel survey, involves the reinterviewing of respondents of a previous poll. The purpose here is to identify any major shift of opinion in the early stages of the campaign. The sample, averaging 250 to 300, presents problems for the pollster because of the difficulty resulting by trying to reach some of these previous respondents.²¹ This phase of the polling process is sometimes passed over by smaller campaigns.

Sabato identifies the next phase of polling, the "tracking" phase, as the most critical kind of election polling.²² When the media campaign begins, the campaign "tracks" voters' reactions to the spots by polling from 50 to 100 respondents each night. Although this sample size is too small to infer any statistical relevance in voter attitude, this technique does allow the pollster to estimate movement in voter attitude when several nights of calling have been completed. The pollster measures movement in voter attitude by using a moving average. After several nights of interviewing, the sample size has become large enough to estimate basic voter attitudes. The pollster then determines a moving average by dropping the oldest sample of calls

with each new night of interviewing. The advantage of this type of poll stems from the fact that it can allow the pollster to determine the direction and rate of change in public opinion. The other polls mentioned can provide only a snapshot of voter attitudes during the period of interviewing. Consequently, tracking polls are used often during the course of the media campaign to provide the media consultant with feedback on the effectiveness of his spots. They are essential for the fine-tuning of the campaign's electronic media.

The final type of poll mentioned by Sabato is the "focus group" interview.²³ This technique is not a random sample poll at all rather, it is an interviewing method designed to obtain qualitative information about voters' attitudes. In a focus group interview, several respondents are brought together into an informal setting for a discussion of the topics of concern to the pollster. The pollster is present and leads the discussion to ensure that the group covers the desired discussion topics. Often, the session is videotaped. The product of this technique is a list of ideas or phrases reflecting the attitudes of typical voters on the topics of interest. These phrases are useful for developing a better polling instrument or as spoken lines in a television spot.

Costs for polling services are standard throughout the industry. The pollster performs the interviews, provides the data processing services needed for calculating the required statistics, and interprets the findings for the campaign. The

total cost for a poll is based usually on the number and length of interviews made. On average, a 30-minute, 500 respondent benchmark poll will cost approximately \$15,000. With the option of using in-house calling, however, polls can be cheaper but less accurate.²⁴

DIRECT MAIL AND TELEPHONE CAMPAIGNING

While political direct mail and telephone banks have become staples of the modern political campaign, very little is known about how effective these technologies are for winning elections. While both of these technologies have become increasingly the domain of professionals, the manpower required to implement these techniques -- especially for phone banks -- tends to come from volunteers in the campaign organization. Sabato points out that in races where resources are limited, the conflict between budgeting for electronic media or for maintaining a campaign organization is settled more often than not in favor of the media people.²⁵ Consequently, major campaigns will budget their resources to favor radio and television while direct mail and phone banks are used more extensively in lower level campaigns where paid broadcasting is not affordable.

While telephone banks are used mostly as a voter contact instrument, direct mail has been used both as a medium for the campaign message and most successfully, as a fundraising instrument. Telephone banks have replaced the old door-to-door canvass as an efficient way for campaigns to identify the name,

address, and candidate preference of the voting public. Prior to the election, each voter is called by a representative of the campaign and asked for this information. The conversation or message read by the solicitor is very simple and to the point. Should the respondent be favorable to the candidate, the campaign can solicit volunteer or financial help immediately, or simply call the respondent again just before election day during their "get-out-the-vote" (GOTV) effort. If the respondent is unfavorable to the candidate, the campaign does not contact him again. In a situation where the respondent is undecided about his vote, the campaign has the opportunity to mail campaign literature to him or present reasons for supporting their candidate over the telephone. The major costs associated with using telephone banks stem from the costs of the telephones and manhours needed to complete the telephone calls. Costs can be reduced, however, by selectively calling into geographic areas where large favorable voter turnouts are needed.

Direct political mail is used both as a voter contact tool and for fundraising. When used for voter contact, political mail can be sent to the respondent of a phone bank, as mentioned above, or to households targeted by certain socio-economic characteristics. In either case, the effective use of mail combines personal contact with an emotional appeal.²⁶ Advanced computer and mailing technologies make both of these qualities possible. The impact that political direct mail has on voter behavior remains uncertain.

Some see direct mail campaigning as less effective than its proponents would have you believe. Berrigan conducted a survey of households receiving both direct mail contact and door-to-door pamphleting. He found that households receiving direct mail were not moved significantly while those receiving some personal contact were moved significantly in terms of name recognition. Berrigan concluded that pamphlets were useful only if accompanied by personal contact and that direct mail was not cost effective. These findings, he points out, are of chief importance for lower level offices such as the Pennsylvania state races used in his study where an average of 40 percent of their campaign budgets were devoted to printed materials.²⁷

When used as a fundraising tool, however, the success of direct mail is easily measured. The most notable case of a successful direct mail fundraising campaign involved The Reverend Jerry Falwell. In October 1979, Falwell sent one of his most successful "putting on the fleece" letters which raised nearly \$6.7 million in one month from his mailing list of 2.5 million families.²⁸ Although this demonstrates an extremely successful mailing, the steps taken by Falwell prior to this particular instance have been performed with similar success by political action committees, the major parties, and major political campaigns. Successful direct mail fundraising requires a period of prospecting where lists of likely contributors are mailed to for campaign contributions. Although these mailings, at best, tend to break even, the campaign will slowly build a list of

contributors willing to contribute several times to the campaign when prompted by subsequent mailings.²⁹ These subsequent mailings can provide the campaign with much steady income during the course of the election but, the time needed to implement this strategy may not make this a viable alternative for some campaigns.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide an overview of the various technologies available to congressional campaigns and how they have been used by past campaigns. Initially, we presented the argument that political campaigning has become increasingly professionalized; that the use of radio and television, opinion polling, and direct mail and phone banks have replaced the party apparatus of earlier campaigns. These technologies can be used differently by different campaigns. When using radio and television, for instance, the campaign may opt for a burst strategy, a continuous strategy, or the intermittent approach. Until recently, it has been difficult to study which technological strategies are employed by campaigns and whether any particular approach is more successful than another. Since campaign technologies cannot be used without campaign funds, the answer to determining campaign strategy and success may lie in campaign budgeting preferences.

In the next chapter we will review past studies of money in politics. These studies will include the more general studies inquiring into whether spending levels affect electoral success as well as the more recent studies examining the spending patterns within campaigns. The purpose here will be to determine whether campaign budget preferences can be linked to electoral success.

NOTES

¹Robert Agranoff, "The New Style of Campaigning: The Decline of Party and the Rise of Candidate Centered Technology," in The New Style in Election Campaigns, Robert Agranoff (Ed.), (Boston, Mass.: Holbrook Press, Inc., 1972), pp. 3 - 50. Agranoff argues that new campaign technology has rendered the political party obsolete as a means for voter contact. Consequently, the modern campaign focuses attention on the candidate and his positions on the issues rather than on part with the candidate as its representative.

²Robert Agranoff, "Campaign Management: Benefits of the Professional Approach," Campaigns and Elections 1980, p. 40.

³Larry J. Sabato, The Rise of Political Consultants: New Ways of Winning Elections (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 52. Much of the information used in this section of our paper is found in this exhaustive study on professional campaigning and political consulting.

⁴Television has also be used as a fundraising tool. Walter Mondale, for instance, organized several hundred livingroom fundraisers around the country during one evening when his campaign ran national television spots. Because Mondale could not attend every one of the small fundraisers, the candidate managed to greet his contributors via television.

⁵Sabato, op. cit., p. 111 - 219.

⁶Ibid., p. 179 - 182. Sabato provides a discussion regarding media costs for political campaigns.

⁷Ibid., p. 179.

⁸Ibid., p. 180.

⁹Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates, The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1984).

¹⁰Ibid., p.302 - 345.

¹¹Ibid., p. 302.

¹²Ibid., p. 310.

¹³Ibid., p. 311.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 314

¹⁶Ibid., p. 344.

¹⁷Philip Kotler, Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, and Control, 4th Edition, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), p. 516 - 519.

¹⁸Richard C. Hofstetter and Terry F. Buss, "Politics and Last-Minute Political Television," Western Political Quarterly 33:24 - 37, 1980.

¹⁹Sabato, op. cit., p. 75 - 80. Sabato's taxonomy of polls follow the standard jargon of the political polling industry.

²⁰Ibid., p. 76.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 77.

²⁴This figure was used for services from Cambridge Survey Research, Washington, D.C. for a congressional benchmark poll in 1984.

²⁵Ibid., p. 197.

²⁶Ibid., p. 220.

²⁷John Berrigan, "The Cost-Effectiveness of Grass-Roots Campaign Activities," Campaigns and Elections 1982: 25 - 33.

²⁸Sabato, op. cit., p. 226.

²⁹Ibid., p. 228 -228. Sabato provides a graphic display describing how this works in practice.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF MONEY

This chapter examines the use and influence of money on congressional elections. The following analysis proceeds in three parts. First, the general spending patterns in federal elections are discussed describing the growth of overall campaign spending and the reasons for this phenomenon. Second, spending patterns within campaign structures will be examined. The purpose here will be to identify how congressional campaigns budget their resources to employ the new campaign technologies. Finally, the question whether money wins elections is explored.

PATTERNS IN CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Two trends in campaign finance have received considerable attention recently by scholars as well as by the public and press. The first aspect, involves campaign fundraising. Specifically, much attention has been given to the growth and influence of political action committees (PACs), organizations created to serve the political needs of special interest groups by supporting favorable candidates financially or through other means. The second dominant aspect is the ever increasing cost of campaigning.

Although the competitive aspect of campaigns naturally induces each side to spend more than the other, the introduction of mass media campaigning in recent years has greatly accelerated the cost of political campaigns. In this section we will examine briefly fundraising patterns in congressional races followed by a discussion of spending patterns and the causes of spiralling campaign costs.

A Note on PAC and Party Spending

Much has been written about PAC fundraising.¹ Although the purpose of this paper is not to deal specifically with the fundraising side of campaigning, the preponderance of PAC activities in congressional campaigns has some important implications for our examination of campaign expenditures.² The most visible problem PAC spending poses for research in campaign finance is the difficulty in measuring the impact of PAC involvement on election outcome. Financial contributions by PACs to individual candidates are regulated by law and are easy to measure, but many of the nonfinancial benefits that come with the involvement of a large organization in a political campaign, such as volunteer recruitment and public endorsement, are difficult to measure.³

Although much public attention has been paid to the direct financial involvement of PAC organizations in political campaigns, recent campaign financial reports suggest that this concern may be exaggerated. Table 3-1 provides a breakdown of funding sources

TABLE 3-1

AVERAGE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM VARIOUS FUNDING SOURCES
FOR HOUSE CANDIDATES, 1981 - 1982
(Thousands of Dollars)

	Total	Individuals	PACs	Party
<hr/>				
Incumbents				
Democrats (N = 218)	\$269,801 (100%)	\$166,112 (61.6%)	\$101,864 (37.7%)	\$ 1,824 (0.7%)
Republicans (N = 168)	304,759 (100%)	187,274 (61.4%)	104,471 (34.3%)	13,014 (4.3%)
Challengers				
Democrats (N = 166)	128,714 (100%)	89,385 (69.4%)	36,364 (28.3%)	1,918 (1.5%)
Republicans (N = 176)	130,303 (100%)	97,539 (74.9%)	23,977 (18.4%)	11,052 (8.5%)
Open Seats				
Democrats (N = 51)	269,462 (100%)	191,361 (71.0%)	74,986 (27.8%)	3,115 (1.2%)
Republicans (N = 51)	329,661 (100%)	238,060 (72.2%)	73,684 (22.4%)	25,018 (7.6%)
<hr/>				

SOURCE: Edie N. Goldenberg and Michael W. Traugott, Campaigning for Congress, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 65.

for House races during the 1981-82 election cycle. Surprisingly, from 60 to 75 percent of all contributions came from individual contributors -- rather than PACs -- making the individual contributor by far the single largest source of campaign funding. Furthermore, with the exception of Democratic incumbents, Republican candidates do better than their Democratic opponents in obtaining individual contributions.⁴

PAC contributions represent the second largest source of funding providing from 18 to 37 percent of all campaign contributions. It is not surprising to find that incumbents do much better than challengers or open seat candidates in raising PAC contributions. Democrats, on the other hand, tend to do slightly better than Republicans in raising PAC money perhaps because more Democrats are incumbents. The remaining .7 to 8.5 percent of campaign funding comes from party organizations. In this area of fundraising, the Republican Party dominates across the board.

The findings in Table 3-1 are important for our research for several reason. The most significant finding is that PAC involvement in congressional races is less important than public attention suggests. Campaign contributions from individuals on average far exceed PAC contributions. Consequently, the base of financial support for competitive campaigns tends to be broad and the likelihood of a single interest group having a strong impact on election outcome is small. Therefore, for our purposes, it will be assumed that the impacts of PAC involvement are offsetting

between the individual campaigns used in our case analyses unless special circumstances warrant a closer examination.

The second significant aspect of this recent data is that the extent of direct spending by the two major parties appears to be minimal in most races. This may be further evidence of the decline of the two-party system. More important, Republican candidates always receive larger amounts from their national party than do Democrats. In close elections, this edge in fundraising held by Republican candidates may be the factor deciding the election, especially where a crucial part of a campaign's strategy may depend on the availability of party funding. For this reason, we must be wary of campaigns receiving party contributions approaching the upper legal limits.

The data in Table 3-1 also sheds light on the question of how political funds are distributed nationally. Researchers have recognized for some time that campaign spending patterns by national organizations, such as the DNC, RNC or major PACs, are made on their estimation of victory within each district. These organizations target their resources according to past election trends within each district paying special attention to incumbency and marginality factors.⁵ Consequently, marginal open-seat races are typically well funded. Contrary to this notion, however, a study by Jacobson and Kernell suggests that incumbents generally benefit most by party assistance.⁶ Because the national congressional campaign committees are penetrated by officeholders, they argue, the money distribution policies of these organizations

seem to be extensions of their members' pursuit of private electoral goals. More important, because the majority of all campaign contributions come from individual donors, the level of personal wealth in each district may have a significant impact on the level of regional spending. To date, very little research examines the key factors affecting national or regional campaign spending patterns.

It can be concluded that successful campaigns must raise money from a number of sources in order to execute their strategies effectively. Surprisingly, the single greatest source of funding for congressional campaigns remains the individual contributor. Consequently, the impacts of PAC and party spending are less significant to election outcome than public attention suggests. For the purpose of this paper, party and PAC spending factors will be considered insignificant to our case analyses unless circumstances warrant special attention.

Campaign Spending Patterns

The second major aspect of modern campaign finance is the ever increasing cost of campaigning at every federal level. Table 3-2 presents the costs of campaigning for President since Lincoln (1860). With few exceptions, combined campaign expenditures rise significantly with each new election. This general trend becomes more dramatic after 1948, when television campaigning became widely used. Whereas Truman and Dewey spent a combined total of \$4,863,630 in 1948, the figure better than doubled in the 1952

TABLE 3-2

COSTS OF PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTIONS, 1860 - 1980

Year	Republican		Democrat	
1860	\$ 100,000	Lincoln*	\$ 50,000	Douglas
1864	125,000	Lincoln*	50,000	McClellan
1868	150,000	Grant*	75,000	Seymour
1872	250,000	Grant*	50,000	Greeley
1876	950,000	Hayes*	900,000	Tilden
1880	1,100,000	Garfield*	335,000	Hancock
1884	1,300,000	Blaine	1,400,000	Cleveland*
1888	1,350,000	Harrison*	855,000	Cleveland
1892	1,700,000	Harrison	2,350,000	Cleveland*
1896	3,350,000	McKinley*	675,000	Bryan
1900	3,000,000	McKinley*	425,000	Bryan
1904	2,096,000	T. Roosevelt*	700,000	Parker
1908	1,655,518	Taft*	629,341	Bryan
1912	1,071,549	Taft	1,134,848	Wilson*
1916	2,441,565	Hughes	2,284,590	Wilson*
1920	5,417,501	Harding*	1,470,371	Cox
1924	4,020,478	Coolidge*	1,108,836	Davis
1928	6,256,111	Hoover*	5,342,350	Smith
1932	2,900,052	Hoover	2,245,975	F. Roosevelt*
1936	8,892,972	Landon	5,194,741	F. Roosevelt*
1940	3,451,310	Willkie	2,783,654	F. Roosevelt*
1944	2,828,652	Dewey	2,169,077	F. Roosevelt*
1948	2,127,296	Dewey	2,736,334	Truman*
1952	6,608,623	Eisenhower*	5,032,926	Stevenson
1956	7,778,702	Eisenhower*	5,106,651	Stevenson
1960	10,128,000	Nixon	9,797,000	Kennedy*
1964	16,026,000	Goldwater	8,757,000	Johnson*
1968	25,402,000	Nixon*	11,594,000	Humphrey
1972	61,400,000	Nixon*	30,000,000	McGovern
1976 ^a	21,786,641	Ford	21,800,000	Carter*
1980 ^b	29,188,188	Reagan*	29,352,767	Carter

* indicates winner

^a 1976 represents the first time public funding was used for presidential elections. The Republican National Committee spent an additional \$1.4 million on Ford's campaign while the Democratic National Committee spent an additional \$2.8 on Carter's campaign.

^b In 1980 the RNC spent an additional \$4.5 million on Reagan's campaign while the DNC spent an additional \$4 million on Carter's campaign.

SOURCE: Herbert E. Alexander, Financing Politics: Money, Elections, and Political Reform, Third Edition, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 7.

contest between Eisenhower and Stevenson where the candidates together spent \$11,641,549.

Since 1974, when detailed campaign expenditure data first became available for Senate and House races, total combined campaign costs have risen at a rate well above the consumer price index. As Table 3-3 describes, combined congressional campaign spending grew from \$66.4 million in 1972 to \$343.9 million in 1982. This represents an average annual growth rate of over 16 percent. When distinctions are made by congressional chamber, total House race expenditures increased by an average annual rate of 14.2 percent while total Senate campaign expenses grew by a whopping 21.1 percent per year, each significantly exceeding the average annual consumer price index.

Looking at House races independently, it is apparent that more candidates are spending greater amounts than in the past (see Table 3-4). In 1974, only ten House candidates from both parties spent more than \$200,000 for their election campaigns. By 1982 this figure grew to a dramatic number of 353 House candidates. Furthermore, in each election year since 1976, more Republican House candidates exceeded the \$200,000 spending threshold than Democrats suggesting that Republican candidates are better financed.

A closer examination of House spending patterns supports the proposition that Republicans spend more than Democrats at all levels, but more important, that incumbents tend to outspend challengers. Table 3-5 breaks down the House campaign data by

TABLE 3-3

CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES, 1972 - 1982

(Millions of Dollars)

Year	Total	Senate	House
1972	\$ 66.4	\$ 26.4	\$ 40.0
1974	73.9	28.9	45.0
1976	125.5	46.3	79.2
1978	197.3	86.7	110.6
1980	238.9	102.9	136.0
1982	343.9	139.3	204.6

SOURCE: Herbert E. Alexander, Financing Politics: Money, Elections, and Political Reform, Third Edition, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 138.

TABLE 3-4

HOUSE CANDIDATES WITH NET EXPENDITURES GREATER THAN \$200,000,
(1974 - 1982)

Year	Republican	Democrat	Total
1974	4	6	10
1976	16	15	31
1978	68	60	128
1980	114	91	205
1982	183	170	353

SOURCE: Money and Politics in the United States: Financing Elections in the 1980's, Michael J. Malbin, ed., (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1984), p. 280.

TABLE 3-5
HOUSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES
(Net Dollars 1974 - 1978)

	1974	1976	1978
<hr/>			
All Candidates			
Total Expenditures	44,051,125	60,046,006	86,129,169
Mean Expenditure	53,384	73,316	109,440
Mean, Democrats	53,993	74,563	108,986
Mean Republicans	54,835	71,945	109,995
Incumbents			
Mean, All Incumbents	56,539	79,398	111,159
Mean, Democrats	38,743	73,322	103,519
Mean, Republicans	80,339	91,456	126,022
Challengers			
Mean, All Challengers	40,015	50,795	74,802
Mean, Democrats	59,266	46,330	70,948
Mean, Republicans	20,644	53,352	77,012
Open Seats			
Mean, All Open-seat Candidates	90,426	124,506	201,049
Mean, Democrats	99,743	145,497	211,871
Mean, Republicans	80,751	101,802	189,205

SOURCE: Money and Politics in the United States: Financing Elections in the 1980's, Michael J. Malbin, ed., (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1984), p. 280.

TABLE 3-5 (Continued)
 HOUSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES
 (Net Dollars 1974 - 1978)

	1980	1982
<hr/>		
All Candidates		
Total Expenditures	115,222,222	174,921,844
Mean Expenditure	153,221	228,060
Mean, Democrats	143,277	213,369
Mean Republicans	164,282	245,020
Incumbents		
Mean, All Incumbents	165,081	265,001
Mean, Democrats	158,010	247,573
Mean, Republicans	177,345	287,543
Challengers		
Mean, All Challengers	121,751	151,717
Mean, Democrats	93,313	141,390
Mean, Republicans	139,111	162,354
Open Seats		
Mean, All Open-seat Candidates	201,790	284,476
Mean, Democrats	180,312	256,004
Mean, Republicans	224,116	314,547
<hr/>		

SOURCE: Money and Politics in the United States: Financing Elections in the 1980's, Michael J. Malbin, ed., (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1984), p. 280.

party and candidate status. As Table 3-5 indicates, average total expenditures spent on House elections grew from \$54,539 in 1974 to \$157,128 in 1980, an average annual growth rate of 12 percent. In every election year except 1976, average Republican campaign spending exceeded that for Democrats. Incumbents, however, always outspent challengers during this time period regardless of party affiliation. For open seats, where national party resources are targeted for spending, the cost of campaigning is expensive with an average of \$209,393 spent by each campaign in each election during 1980.

The main implication of these findings is the increasing difficulty for average citizens to run for federal office. In races with incumbents running for reelection, it is clear that challengers seldom are able to match the spending levels of their incumbent opponents, but in open seat contests the lack of an incumbent attracts national party and PAC attention to the race encouraging higher spending. Consequently, many potential congressional candidates are eliminated from competition because they cannot reach the minimum threshold of campaign spending which continues to get ever higher.

Several factors have contributed to the extraordinary rise in campaign costs including inflation and the sheer competitive nature of the two-party electoral system, but most scholars agree that the primary cause in recent years is the increasing use of paid political advertising particularly for television. Since Heard's study in 1956, which is the first to investigate the

allocation of resources within campaign structures, media and advertising expenses for radio, television, newspapers, billboards and other printed materials amounted to more than half of all campaign expenditures for both parties.⁷ Furthermore, Heard found that between September and November 1956, the Republicans and Democrats spent 23 and 20 percent or \$3 million and \$2.3 million of their respective campaign budgets on television alone. These figures express a dramatic change in campaign budgeting patterns because television advertising was virtually nonexistent in the 1948 presidential elections yet, only two election cycles later, both parties were willing to devote a significant amount of their resources in the new technology.

It remains unclear whether campaign budgets have been affected most by growing costs in the television industry or because campaigns have continued to expand their use of television. The answer may be both. As Table 3-6 demonstrates, the combined spending for radio and television by presidential campaigns has grown from \$3.6 million in 1952 to over \$30.7 in 1980. This represents an average annual spending increase of 15 percent, but this growth rate is very erratic when examined from election to election. In 1964, for example, electronic media spending increased by a whopping 267 percent over the previous election, whereas television and radio spending actually dropped by nearly 44 percent between the 1968 and 1972 campaigns.

When examined as a percentage of combined aggregate campaign spending (see Table 3-7), a clear but unexpected relationship is

TABLE 3-6

AGGREGATE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION TIME
(Presidential General Election Campaigns, 1952 - 1980)

Year	Republican	Democrat	Total
1952	\$ 2,046,000*	\$1,530,000	\$3,576,000
1956	2,886,000*	1,763,000	4,649,000
1960	1,865,000	1,142,000*	3,007,000
1964	6,370,000	4,674,000*	11,044,000
1968	12,598,000*	6,143,000	18,741,000
1972	4,300,000*	6,200,000	10,500,000
1976	7,875,000	9,081,321*	16,956,321
1980	12,324,000* ^a	18,400,000	30,724,000

* designates winner

^aExcludes approximately \$245,000 in coordinated expenditures by the Republican National Committee for media buys on behalf of the Reagan-Bush campaign or approximately \$4.2 million spent by the RNC during the general election for all Republican federal office candidates.

SOURCE: Herbert E. Alexander, Financing Politics: Money, Elections, and Political Reform, Third Edition, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 13.

TABLE 3-7

RADIO AND TELEVISION EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
AGGREGATE CAMPAIGN SPENDING
(Presidential General Election Campaigns, 1952 - 1980)

Year	Aggregate Campaign Spending	Aggregate Radio & T.V. Expenditures	Percentage of Expenditures Used For Radio & T.V.
1952	\$ 11,641,549	\$ 3,576,000	30.7%
1956	12,885,353	4,649,000	36.1
1960	19,925,000	3,007,000	15.1
1964	24,783,000	11,044,000	44.6
1968	36,996,000	18,741,000	50.7
1972	91,400,000	10,500,000	11.5
1976	43,586,641	16,956,321	38.9
1980	58,540,955	30,724,000	52.5

SOURCE: Table 3-1 and Table 3-7.

seen. Since 1952, the percentage of aggregate campaign resources used for radio and television over total aggregate campaign spending has increased steadily with the exception of every third election year (1960 and 1972). In each of these exceptional years, a dramatic decline in percentage has taken place because while all campaign spending rose significantly, less money was spent on radio and television than in the previous election. There is little to explain this phenomena because each of these elections were run under different circumstances: 1960 was a close open-seat election between Kennedy and Nixon while in 1972 an incumbent Nixon easily defeated McGovern.

Disregarding this "third election year correction cycle," it is safe to say that the percentage of combined financial resources used by presidential campaigns for radio and television has steadily increased over time. Furthermore, since the presidential elections of the 1950's, radio and television campaigning has become the norm in American politics with television advertising being used in elections at every federal level. The example of television demonstrates how modern political campaigns are willing to accept new technologies which may provide a winning edge. In the following sections we will examine the use of television and other campaign technologies in congressional campaigns.

INTERNAL BUDGETING PATTERNS

Much can be learned about how campaigns implement their strategies by examining their expenditure patterns. Until 1974, however, when changes in federal election law required campaigns to itemize receipts and expenditures, very little was known about spending patterns within campaigns. Prior to the 1974 FEC regulations, Adamany was able to observe the spending of Democratic candidates for the 1964 gubernatorial and senatorial elections in Wisconsin.⁸ It is not surprising Adamany found that nearly 53 percent of the combined expenditures of these major campaigns were budgeted for mass media advertising followed by 18 percent for party organization expenses and 10 percent for campaign materials. Surprisingly, only one percent of all campaign expenditures were budgeted for opinion polling.⁹

Taking advantage of the recent changes in the election laws, Goldenberg and Traugott have been able to compile spending statistics for House races during 1977 and 1978.¹⁰ Table 3-8 provides their basic breakdown of congressional campaign expenditures by each candidate's likelihood of victory. All of the candidates in their sample spent an average of \$67,575. It is not surprising that vulnerable incumbents spent much more than the average candidate (\$113,409), or that the sure losers spent the least (\$17,895 on average). The low figure for sure losers demonstrates that a minimum budget threshold may exist for campaigns to be competitive.

TABLE 3-8

HOUSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGET
BY LIKELIHOOD OF VICTORY, 1977 - 1978

	All Candidates (\$64,575)	Sure Winners (\$43,007)	Hopefuls (\$62,018)	Vulnerables (\$113,409)	Sure Losers (\$17,895)
Advertising	58.1%	51.0%	57.7%	62.6%	59.1%
Staff Salaries	16.1	13.9	18.7	19.0	16.1
Office Expenses	7.6	8.5	8.1	6.5	7.1
Financial Transactions	5.4	8.2	5.7	1.4	6.8
Organized Events	4.5	8.7	2.7	4.5	3.3
Staff Expenses	5.1	7.1	3.1	3.3	5.1
Research	2.7	2.3	3.2	2.4	2.0
Other	.5	.2	.7	.3	.4

SOURCE: Edie N. Goldenberg and Michael W. Traugott, Campaigning for Congress, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 86.

Like Adamany, Goldenberg and Traugott found that most campaign funds (58 percent) were spent on advertising. This was followed by staff salaries and expenses (21 percent combined total) which is a higher percentage of the budget than that found in Adamany's state-wide elections. This is expected because of the economies-of-scale existing for the state-wide races. Of the incumbents in the sample, those considered vulnerable spent significantly more (62.6 percent) of their resources on advertising than those considered sure winners (51 percent). This figure is magnified even further by the fact that the vulnerable incumbents spent much more money overall (\$113,409 on average) than incumbents considered sure winners (\$43,007 on average).

Table 3-9 compares the likelihood of a candidate's victory with a breakdown of media expenditures. Vulnerable incumbents had the largest media budgets spending, on average, \$70,950 which is nearly twice the overall average media budget of \$36,643. Sure losers, on the other hand, failed to raise even one third of the average expenditures spent by all campaigns on their media budgets (\$10,569). This suggests that electoral success may require some minimum threshold of spending on campaign media.

The single largest area of media spending for congressional campaigns in this study was for printing costs (32.6 percent on average) followed by television (23.4 percent). Because congressional races are lower-level campaigns, budgeting decisions appear to favor building an organizational structure (which requires printed materials), rather than depending solely on

TABLE 3-9
HOUSE CAMPAIGN MEDIA EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MEDIA
BUDGET BY LIKELIHOOD OF VICTORY, 1977 - 1978

	All Candidates (\$36,643)	Sure Winners (\$21,967)	Hopefuls (\$35,826)	Vulnerables (\$70,950)	Sure Losers (\$10,569)
Printing	32.6%	37.6%	33.9%	28.3%	26.6%
Television	23.4	20.2	23.9	24.3	36.3
Undesignated Activities	22.7	6.8	20.5	30.2	12.2
Newspapers	8.7	18.2	7.6	7.3	12.1
Radio	6.5	9.0	6.5	5.8	6.6
Outdoor	3.6	6.5	4.0	2.6	3.8
Movies, Photos, Misc.	2.5	1.7	3.6	1.5	2.3

SOURCE: Edie N. Goldenberg and Michael W. Traugott, Campaigning for Congress, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 90.

electronic media advertising. This may be true because television expenses are not cost-effective for the size of budgets projected by these campaigns. Newspaper advertising receives, on average, 8.7 percent of the typical congressional media dollar. One unusual observation regarding internal spending patterns is that the sure winners spend more than twice the group average on newspaper advertising (18.2 percent of their budgets). It is possible that because the sure winners do not feel the need to actively campaign, they can afford to demonstrate token campaign activity by advertising in a passive medium such as the newspaper.

Surprisingly, nearly 23 percent of the average congressional campaign budget is spent on undesignated activities. Several media functions may be grouped together under this single category. Among these costs may be the consultant fees and expenses which suggests that these campaigns may benefit from considerable expertise. The fact that this area of spending is relatively high, however, suggests that this is not the case. Instead, there may be a great lack of proper media planning or control over the uses of media funds because much is spent on this undefined area of the budget rather than on specific media technologies. Sure winners spend only about a third as much in this area as the other contenders suggesting that winning campaigns predesignate their expenditures.

Table 3-10 demonstrates how incumbents, open-seat candidates, and challengers for Congress budget their campaign media dollar. There is very little difference in the way each of these

TABLE 3-10

HOUSE CAMPAIGN MEDIA EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MEDIA
BUDGET BY CANDIDATE STATUS, 1977 - 1978

	Incumbents (\$38,481)	Open-Seats (\$69,448)	Challengers (\$25,105)
Printing	32.8%	31.3%	33.4%
Television	20.2	26.4	25.6
Undesignated Activities	23.4	25.9	19.0
Newspapers	10.9	5.4	8.2
Radio	6.6	6.4	6.4
Outdoor	3.8	2.8	4.0
Movies, Photos, Misc.	2.5	2.0	3.5

SOURCE: Edie N. Goldenberg and Michael W. Traugott, Campaigning for Congress, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 90.

candidates budget their media resources. Printing is the single largest area of spending for all candidates followed by television. For incumbents television spending is third behind undesignated activities. Incumbents (who tend to be sure winners as well) spend much more than the other candidates on newspaper advertising.

Table 3-11 provides a comparison between incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates for total campaign spending over time. For all three candidate types, most of their campaign expenditures are disbursed during the four months prior to election day. Incumbents spend 67 percent of their budget during this final stage while open-seat candidates spend over 64 percent and challengers spend nearly 80 percent. All three candidate types tend to save their resources until the final stages of the campaign.

Generally, money spent during the year prior to the election year is used to run a benchmark poll, to hire a campaign staff, and to initiate the campaign fundraising activities. Challengers spend less than 2 percent of their projected budget during the year prior to the election year and spend nothing until the fourth quarter of that year. This suggests that most challengers may not consider becoming candidates for the office until the year of the election putting them at a severe disadvantage with the incumbent who already has a fundraising operation in place and who has already spent, on average, 16 percent of his projected budget. Furthermore, because challenger candidates are not spending money

TABLE 3-11

MEAN EXPENDITURES OVER TIME FOR HOUSE CANDIDATES,
BY STATUS, 1977 - 1978

(Actual Dollars)

	Incumbents (N = 71)	Challengers (N = 74)	Open-Seats (N = 22)
<hr/>			
Year: 1977			
1st Quarter	\$3,956 (3.7%)	\$0 (--)	\$0 (--)
2nd Quarter	\$3,985 (3.8%)	\$0 (--)	\$411 (0.2%)
3rd Quarter	\$3,382 (3.2%)	\$41 (0%)	\$1,252 (0.6%)
4th Quarter	\$5,847 (5.5%)	\$909 (1.3%)	\$5,075 (2.6%)
Total 1977	\$17,170 (16.2%)	\$950 (11.3%)	\$6,738 (3.4%)
Year: 1978			
1st Quarter	\$6,138 (5.9%)	\$1,957 (2.9%)	\$18,838 (9.7%)
2nd Quarter	\$11,561 (10.9%)	\$11,221 (16.6%)	\$43,356 (22.4%)
3rd/4th Quarter (July 1 -)	\$70,731 (67.0%)	\$53,663 (79.2%)	\$124,801 (64.4%)
Two Year Total	\$105,645	\$67,791	\$193,733
<hr/>			

SOURCE: Edie N. Goldenberg and Michael W. Traugott, Campaigning for Congress, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984), p. 96.

during the early stages of the election cycle, they are probably unaware of their true chances for success because their campaigns have not performed the proper amount of benchmark polling.

Candidates in open-seat elections, on the other hand, spend, on average, 3.4 percent of their budgets by the first of the election year. Consequently, they are probably better aware of their chances for victory and have a more realistic sense of what must be accomplished during the campaign to win election due to the results of their early polling.

STUDIES OF MONEY IN POLITICS: WHO WINS?

Prior to 1972, when federal restrictions required political campaigns to file detailed contribution and expenditure reports, very little was known or written about campaign spending. Consequently, much of the work done until then focuses on gathering basic data such as aggregate spending levels, broadcast expenditures and contributions by labor and business organizations.¹¹ Because the earliest studies relied on simple and often incomplete aggregate data, early explanations regarding the basic relationship between money and winning elections were sometimes flawed. At one time, for instance, it was believed that those who spent the most money won elections. This rule, however, fell apart when both Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman were elected while spending less money than their opponents.¹²

Since 1972, there has been an explosion of research examining the relationship between money and politics. Money has come to be regarded as one of several political resources required by successful campaigns but, the true impact of money on electoral victory is still disputed. Working independently, Welch and Jacobson established the framework for current research by being the first to use econometric methods and production theory to examine the relationship between money and votes.

By employing a simple Cobb-Douglas production function, Welch explains how money, an election input, affects the expected vote, the election output.¹³ After testing his initial model using state legislative electoral data, Welch drew several conclusions. First, his production function demonstrates that the marginal percentage of vote gained by a candidate diminishes as total campaign expenditures increase. This finding is surprising as previous logic held that higher campaign expenditures would necessarily lead to more votes. Second, he found that money spent during a primary is more effective than money spent during the general election. This is true, he argues, because most voters participating in a general election select on the basis of party label. Finally, he concluded that incumbency has a greater impact on election outcome than all other factors considered. This last point is not surprising given the high reelection rates of incumbents. Welch was not willing to say, however, what the value of incumbency is in monetary terms.

Jacobson's research was prompted by the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974 and the limits this law imposed on party contributions to federal candidates.¹⁴ Like Welch, Jacobson employed a regression analysis to develop a model for predicting election results and found that campaign expenditures, incumbency and candidate party strength all have a significant impact on the proportion of the vote won by a candidate. Furthermore, he found that campaign money is most important for challengers. Jacobson points out that funding allows these candidates to build name recognition among the voters -- an advantage that incumbents already have. The more challengers spend, he argues, the better known they become and therefore more electable. Because the 1974 FEC Act limits campaign spending by political parties, Jacobson concludes, the law may reduce the chances of challengers to win races and thereby strengthen the role of incumbency in determining election outcome.

In the discussion that followed, several refinements were made to the initial findings by Welch and Jacobson. Owens and Olson experimented with different methods of measurement for the various factors in the equation with the hope of refining its election predicting capability.¹⁵ Eventually, they were able to explain as much as 90 percent of the variability in the vote percentage for a candidate by the factors of incumbency, campaign expenditures and party strength. They found campaign expenditures to be the best predictor followed by party strength (as measured by presidential vote) and incumbency respectively. Although their

findings contradict the widely held belief that incumbency is the chief factor in getting elected, they found through path analysis that incumbency has substantial indirect impact on election outcome through the intervening variable of spending.

Arrington and Ingalls tested Jacobson's model on local races in North Carolina from 1975 through 1980.¹⁶ Their research is unique in that the set of elections in the sample set included non-partisan elections and primaries and elections for single-member and multiple-seat districts. They found that incumbents were favored in every type of election receiving from three to twenty percent more votes than challengers. Campaign spending, they found through step-wise regression, is always either the first or second most significant independent variable in each election. Furthermore, they concluded that the role of campaign spending is as strong in partisan general elections as in primaries or non-partisan elections. Campaign expenditures, they argue, are most important in single-member districts, where the nature of the constituencies remain fairly constant. Party labels, they found, did not reduce the advantage of those who spent more.

Silberman modified Welch's production function suggesting instead that the expected vote does not depend on the absolute level of each candidate's inputs, rather the relative level of each candidate's inputs vis-a-vis the other is what is important.¹⁷ Rather than using absolute data in his model, Silberman employs a ratio scale for each of the factors mentioned

by Welch and Jacobson: relative campaign expenditures, relative incumbency, and relative party strength. He tests his model using 1972 congressional election data and determines that the three factors mentioned above account for nearly 80 percent of the variance in the expected vote. Consequently, Silberman drew many of the same conclusions as Welch, but two points about Silberman's study are most important. First, Silberman found that the vote percentage for a candidate increases at a decreasing rate despite the candidate may continue to increase expenditure inputs at a constant rate. In effect, the law of diminishing returns takes place with respect to a candidate's campaign investment. Second, incumbency is a particularly strong factor. Silberman argues that given similar campaign expenditure levels between incumbent and challenger candidates, the advantages of incumbency usually determines the winner.

In a later study with Yochum, Silberman tries to determine how much money is needed for candidates to win under various circumstances.¹⁸ They found during the 1972 and 1974 elections that in races where spending levels were low (under \$100,000), the marginal benefit of increasing campaign expenditures aided first and second term incumbents most of all followed by challengers and incumbents with more than two terms. Furthermore, all marginal increases in voter percentage disappeared in races where the candidates spent over \$175,000. In contests where spending was high, they found that the benefits of marginality belong to the challengers. Silberman and Yochum concluded that spending limits

set above \$175,000 are useless and that limits set lower would always favor incumbents. They also found that Democrats were able to achieve higher absolute levels of change in marginal vote than Republicans. Whether this phenomenon was a result of electoral backlash to the Nixon Administration's failures, they were not willing to say. In all cases, the marginal change in vote percentage never exceeded four percent suggesting that the current high levels of spending in congressional races are used to gain only a very small percentage of the electorate. This last point is most significant because it suggests that in some elections, no amount of money will help a candidate win. In very close elections, however, additional campaign spending may be the deciding factor.

Welch drew similar conclusions in a work published five years after his original model was developed.¹⁹ In this study, Welch analyzes competitive House races in 1972 (the first year campaign expenditure data were available). Welch found, as expected, that money does influence voting in House elections, but the effect was small. In other words, he suggests, had funding limits or public financing been used, very few elections would have been changed. In addition, Welch examined how campaign fundraising is affected by district characteristics and the success potential of the candidate. He found that total contributions are positively related to median income and the dispersion of income in the district. Furthermore, he found that campaign funds are raised more easily by candidates who are perceived to be likely winners.

These conclusions suggest some of the difficulties encountered by challengers who need sufficient funding to be competitive yet are not perceived as potential winners early in the race or are running in a poor district.

A study by Glantz, Abramowitz and Burkart considers the marginal vote contribution of campaign expenditures.²⁰ After examining election data from California Assembly and House races, they found that incumbents' expenditures do not affect their margin of victory; rather, their margin of victory tends to decline as more money is spent. "It appears," they suggest, "that when a strong challenger mounts an effective campaign, he raises substantial sums of money and the incumbent responds by raising more money than he would have raised without a strong challenger."²¹ The main factor determining the closeness of an election, they conclude, is not the fact that the incumbent spends more than the challenger but rather that the challenger is unable to raise sufficient quantities of money. Furthermore, few challengers probably spend enough to witness diminishing returns as Silberman had argued earlier.

In a follow-up study to his original research, Jacobson demonstrates how spending by challengers has a substantial impact on election outcomes while spending by incumbents has relatively little impact.²² Furthermore, Jacobson found the more incumbents spend, the worse they do. This point is significant because it contradicts the diminishing marginal returns assumption held previously, but supports the contentions made by Glantz,

Abramowitz and Burkart. He explains that incumbents apparently increase or decrease their spending in reaction to changes in the amount spent by opponents. Incumbents, he argues, acquire funds only in proportion to the felt necessity to do so. Consequently, the intensity of campaign spending on the part of an incumbent is a function of their likelihood of defeat. Jacobson concludes that:

Campaign spending helps candidates, most particularly nonincumbents, by bringing them to the attention of voters. It is not the case that well-known candidates simply attract more money; rather, money buys attention.²³

Surprisingly, only two years later, Jacobson became less committed to this conclusion. After further study on the matter, Jacobson was willing to conclude that well-known candidates attract votes and money:

Campaign spending may help win popular support, and thus votes, but characteristics that also help to attract votes -- personal charm or "charisma," political skill and experience -- should also ease the job of fund raising. Candidates who are well known and who have political experience (and thus a greater expectation of success) raise money more easily, spend it, thereby increasing their popularity further, acquiring in consequence even more money, and so on, the ultimate payoff coming in the form of additional votes on election day.²⁴

In other words, money may flow to a candidate for the same reasons that votes do or, as Jacobson suggests, the relationship between expenditures and votes may be reciprocal. The expectation that a candidate will do well may be the factor which brings additional campaign contributions. This reasoning ultimately

suggests election outcomes may result in part as self fulfilling prophecies where money and votes flow to the candidate who successfully argues that he has the best chance for victory. Either way, media spending is an integral part of the successful campaign. Jacobson's observation leads to the question of internal campaign spending patterns -- particularly the effectiveness of media expenditures. Since money is considered crucial for bringing the candidacy of a challenger to the attention of the public, the relationship between campaign money and media spending, the mechanism through which public attention is sought, is of chief importance to our study.

Several studies inquire into the effectiveness of television and radio spending. As in other areas of campaign finance research, early studies of campaign media spending were preoccupied with the legislative regulation of campaign spending. Dawson and Zinser performed one of the seminal studies in this area in 1971.²⁵ In their research, Dawson and Zinser employed a regression analysis to compare the share of vote received by congressional candidates to several independent factors including incumbency, party, and level of media expenditures. They found that a significant determinant of the winner's broadcast expenditures, in conjunction with incumbency, is the level of broadcasting expenditures incurred by the losing candidates. In other words, candidates seek to outspend one another in broadcasting expenditures and those who do tend to win elections.

Palda found similar results in his study of Canadian races during the same election cycle.²⁶ Using a similar type of regression analysis, Palda rejected his null hypothesis that no advertising affect existed in his sample. Palda's study is significant, however, because he is concerned with the existence of a saturation point in media advertising where additional media spending will have no marginal impact on the election outcome. To answer this question, he correctly compares the share of total vote received by each candidate rather than assuming a winner-take-all format. Palda fails to find the existence of a voter saturation point.

Jacobson conducted a great deal of research in the area of media spending.²⁷ Like Dawson and Zinser, he employed a regression analysis approach to compare broadcast expenditures with incumbency and party strength indices. Unlike his predecessors, Jacobson examined races at different federal levels and at different stages in the election cycle. He concluded that broadcast campaigning has its greatest effect in the presidential races. Furthermore, broadcast campaigning has its greatest effect in primary elections rather than in the general elections. Like the other regression research performed previously, this study also concluded that broadcast expenditures have an impact on voting.

A study by Volgy and Schwartz in 1980 took a different approach than previous research in media campaigning.²⁸ They sought to answer the question regarding which groups within the

voting population are influenced most by television campaigning. Research in this area is important for improving media spending practices because it allows campaigns to determine better their target audience.

Very little is known about what motivates a campaign to pursue a particular strategy. A study by Hershey, however, suggests a theory which should be pursued further.²⁹ Hershey hypothesizes that relative uncertainty about an election outcome induces a candidate to work harder in a campaign. Under uncertain conditions, she found, political candidates will employ more methods of campaigning than in elections where the outcome appears to be certain. Hershey suggests that candidates can never be sure which campaign technique or combination of techniques are the most effective. Although past winners are the experts, they cannot afford to rely on a single method of voter contact. The campaign, therefore, will use as many types of appeals to the voters as it feels it can afford.

Hershey's conclusions draw some important implications for research in campaign finance. We have mentioned how candidates who appear to be sure winners or sure losers tend to spend less in their campaigns than vulnerable incumbents or open-seat candidates (refer to Table 3-8 and 3-11). Hershey's model explains this phenomenon rather well. In the case of the sure winners or sure losers, the outcome is very certain and the candidates in either situation are not motivated to campaign with the same vigor as candidates running in elections perceived to be close. This

includes performing the fundraising function of the campaign. Consequently, the amount of funds raised and spent by the campaign may be the result of the relative motivation of the candidate which, Hershey argues, is a function of the closeness of the election.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to review the research inquiring into the role of money in elections. The first section of this chapter explored the most studied aspect of campaign spending: fundraising and the rising cost of campaigning. It was found that campaign funding sources include individual donors, political action committees (PACs), and the political parties. Individuals contribute the largest portion of campaign funds by far followed by PACs and parties. For the purpose of our research it is important to note that total contributions and the costs associated with running for office have increased well above the rate of inflation for many years. Money, it would seem, has become a critical resource for political campaigns.

The second section of this chapter discussed the research inquiring into whether overall spending levels determine electoral success. For many years, it was believed that presidential candidates spending the most during their campaigns won election. This belief was discredited when both Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman won election while spending less than their opponents. Recent research has determined, however, that campaign

expenditures, along with incumbency and party strength, may be reliable predictors of election outcome. In very close elections, campaign spending may be the most significant factor.

Because research has indicated that campaign spending may have an impact on election outcome, the final section of this chapter attempts to determine how this is possible by focusing on internal campaign budgeting patterns. Until 1974, when changes in federal election laws required federal campaigns to submit detailed financial statements, very little was written about congressional campaign budgeting. Since then several studies have been published, the most extensive work being produced by Goldenberg and Traugott. In their study, Goldenberg and Traugott compared the internal spending patterns over time of various candidates ranked by their predicted likelihood of success. Among their conclusions, they found that most campaign funds (58 percent) were spent on advertising, suggesting that advertising spending is seen as the most important area for campaign funds. Contrary to this observation, they found that as much as 23 percent of all campaign funds were spent on undersigned activities, suggesting that campaign professionalization may still lag in the lower federal races. Furthermore, they found all candidates spent more than 64 percent of their budgets in the fourth quarter of the campaign.

The next chapter will present the findings of our research. Because Goldenberg and Traugott performed the definitive study for current research into internal campaign budgeting patterns, this

study will refer to their conclusions when presenting its findings. Special attention will be paid to whether congressional campaigns still spend most of their funds on advertising, whether a large percentage of funds are spent on undesignated activities, and whether campaigns continue to employ a strategy of spending most of their money in the final quarter of the campaign year.

NOTES

¹For a discussion of PAC activities during the 1982 elections see: Larry J. Sabato, "Parties, PACs, and Interest Groups," in The American Elections of 1982, ed., Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein (Washington: The American Enterprise Institute, 1983), pp. 72 - 110.

²During the period from 1974 to 1980, the total number of registered federal PACs quadrupled from 608 to 2551. The largest group being the corporate PACs growing in number from 89 to 1204 followed by trade groups (574 in 1980) and labor organizations (378 in 1980) respectively. PAC spending for all congressional candidates grew from \$8.5 million in 1972 to \$58.4 million in 1980.

³A second problem stems from a recent Supreme Court ruling (Buckley v. Valeo) allowing contributors to exceed contribution limits to campaigns by making independent expenditures for promoting or advocating the defeat of a candidate without the consultation or request of a candidate in the election. For a discussion, see: Larry J. Sabato, The Rise of Political Consultants: New Ways of Winning Elections (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 281.

⁴One reason why Republican candidates fare better in this area of fundraising stems from the advances made in direct mail solicitation technology pioneered by the RNC and certain conservative think tanks such as The Richard A. Viguerie Company (RAVCO). Direct mail fundraising has given the Republicans a broad base of financial support nationally and many of the contributors on these lists donate repeatedly to various Republican candidates at every federal level. For a discussion on the uses of direct mail fundraising see: Sabato, Ibid. pp. 220 - 263.

⁵Robert J. Huckshorn and Robert C. Spencer, The Politics of Defeat: Campaigning for Congress (Boston: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1971), pp. 6-12. Huckshorn and Spencer provide a good description of how the targeting process works and how candidates have little power over who receives the benefits of running in a "marginal" district. Also see: Sabato, "Parties, PACs and Independent Groups," op. cit., pp. 90 - 94.

⁶Gary C. Jacobson and Samuel Kernell, Strategy and Choice in Congressional Elections (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 40.

⁷Alexander Heard, The Costs of Democracy (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), p. 391.

⁸David Adamany, Financing Politics; Recent Wisconsin Elections, (Madison, Wis.: The University Of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

⁹Ibid., p.120.

¹⁰Edie N. Goldenberg and Michael W. Traugott, Campaigning for Congress, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1984).

¹¹See: Alexander Heard, The Costs of Democracy, (Durham: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960) and Herbert E. Alexander, Financing the 1968 Election, (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1971).

¹²Heard, Ibid., p. 16-19. Heard offers a comprehensive overview of the literature to 1960 and includes the arguments both for and against this original hypothesis.

¹³William P. Welch, "The Economics of Campaign Funds," Public Choice 20:83-98, 1974 and "The Effectiveness of Expenditures in State Legislative Races," American Politics Quarterly 4:333-356, July 1976.

¹⁴Gary C. Jacobson, "Practical Consequences of Campaign Finance Reform: An Incumbent Protection Act?" Public Policy 24:1-31, Fall 1976.

¹⁵John R. Owens and Edward C. Olson, "Campaign Spending and the Electoral process in California, 1966 - 1974," Western Political Quarterly 30:493-512, 1977.

¹⁶Theodore S. Arrington and Gerald L. Ingalls, "The Effects of Campaign Spending on Local Elections," American Politics Quarterly 12:117-127, January 1984.

¹⁷Jonathan Silberman, "A Comment on the Economics of Campaign Funds," Public Choice 25:69-74, 1976.

¹⁸Jonathan Silberman and Gilbert Yochum, "The Role of Money in Determining Election Outcomes," Social Science Quarterly 58:671-682, 1978. Silberman and Yochum use a quadratic formula based on Jacobson's original model reaching an R^2 value of 68 percent. They compare candidates in three categories (challengers, first and second term incumbents and incumbents with more than two terms) and by party on the basis of their marginal change in percentage of vote associated with increases in campaign expenditures.

¹⁹William P. Welch, "Money and Votes: A Simultaneous Equation Model," Public Choice 26:209-234, 1981.

²⁰Stanton A. Glantz, Alan I. Abramowitz and Michael Burkart, "Election Outcomes: Whose Money Matters?" Journal of Politics 38:1033-1038, 1976.

²¹Ibid., pp. 1037-1038.

²²Gary C. Jacobson, "The Effects of Campaign Spending in Congressional Elections," American Political Science Review 72:469-491, 1978. Jacobson uses a two-stage least squares regression analysis on 1972-1974 election data. The difference in spending levels by incumbents is negatively correlated (-.58) with the difference in the proportion of the vote won. A significant relationship remains even when the change in challenger spending is taken into account -- particularly in congressional elections.

²³Ibid. p. 491.

²⁴Gary C. Jacobson, Money in Congressional Elections, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 48 - 50.

²⁵Paul A. Dawson and James E. Zinser, "Broadcast Expenditures and Electoral Outcomes in the 1970 Congressional Elections," Public Opinion Quarterly 35:398 - 402, Fall 1971.

²⁶Kristian S. Palda, "Does Advertising Influence Votes? An Analysis of the 1966 and 1970 Quebec Elections," Canadian Journal of Political Science 6:639 - 655, 1973.

²⁷Gary C. Jacobson, "The Impacts of Broadcast Campaigning on Electoral Outcomes," Journal of Politics 37:769 -793, 1975.

²⁸Thomas J. Volgy and John E. Schwartz, "On Television Viewing and Citizens' Political Attitudes, Activity, and Knowledge: Another Look at the Impact of Media on Politics," Western Political Quarterly 33:2:153 - 166, June 1980.

²⁹Marjorie Randon Hershey, The Making of Campaign Strategy, (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heathand Company, 1974), pp. 23 - 28.

CHAPTER IV

SPENDING PATTERNS FOR COMPETITIVE CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

Our purpose in this paper is to inquire into the relationship between campaign budgeting decisions and success in congressional elections. Specifically, we are concerned with how budgeting decisions are affected by fundraising expectations and whether this makes a difference in campaign success. Underlying this thesis is the assumption that campaign budgets reflect the basic strategy pursued by political campaigns. For argument sake, it is assumed that campaigns raising significant sums of money early in the election cycle are more successful because they are able to budget their resources better and can pursue a winning strategy.

In order to control this experiment, only certain elections will be examined. We will look at congressional races rated too close to predict by the editors of the Congressional Quarterly prior to election day. By selecting close elections, we hope to see campaigns where the impact of budgeting strategy is the key element to success. The data sample will be extended over the 1982 and 1984 election cycles to avoid external influences such as the "surge and decline" effect discussed in chapter one.

Because the sample set of this study will be very small, no attempt will be made to apply a statistical analysis to the data other than comparing actual average dollars. The purpose here will be to make general observations and provide a point of reference for future research. Specifically, this thesis will compare successful campaigns with unsuccessful campaigns over time using a two step approach. First, the flow of contributions into the campaigns will be examined. Second, the flow of contributions will be compared to the budgeting patterns of each case over time. Special attention will be paid to the relationship between media expenditures and the inflow of contributions. It is hypothesized that media expenditures will begin later in campaigns where fundraising is moving slowly and these campaigns will more often be losing efforts. Special attention will be paid to spending for polling. It is hypothesized that campaigns spending too little for polling, in most cases, will not be successful because incomplete information is used to develop the campaign message.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of the Sample

Past research indicates that campaign spending is one of several significant factors affecting congressional election outcomes. Other factors include incumbency and the "surge and decline" effect associated with presidential campaigns. This

research differs from past studies by examining only the elections predicted to be close. By viewing only competitive races, it is hoped that the influences of these other variables will be minimized and that the cases in this study clearly demonstrate how campaign funding and budget preferences can make the difference in the election outcome.

The selection of the campaigns for the data sample was based on the fact that the Congressional Quarterly considered their outcome unpredictable. Congressional Quarterly was chosen as the expert source for predicting election outcomes because it is one of very few scholarly publications devoted to congress which is commonly recognized as an impartial, nonpartisan source of information.

Appendices A and B list the campaigns used in the sample: Appendix A listing eleven 1982 congressional races and Appendix B list five 1984 races. In their pre-election day issues of 1982 and 1984, the Congressional Quarterly listed each of these contests as having "no clear favorite."¹ In all cases, two challengers were vying for the same seat. As mentioned previously, 1982 and 1984 elections were used to compare campaigns in both the surge and decline situations resulting from having the president on and off the election ballot.

As earlier research suggests, most congressional campaigns are not competitive. Incumbents, for instance, tend to be reelected at an overwhelming rate. Because our data sample includes only competitive campaigns, we are excluding the majority

of congressional elections being decided during the time of our study. Consequently, there are some differences between our data sample and the universe of congressional elections which must be addressed. For instance, it is expected that the average level of total spending will be higher for our sample than for all other races. The reason for this stems from the perception of campaign donors that most races are unwinnable and therefore, should not be supported financially. Furthermore, because the races in our sample will have larger budgets, they will be able to use the most current technologies and spend larger amounts in each area such as radio and television.

Data Collection

Campaign financial records were collected from periodic statements issued by the campaigns to the Federal Election Commission (FEC). By law, congressional campaigns must submit reports of their contributions and disbursements to the FEC. Reports are due quarterly, prior to a primary or general election, and after a primary or general election.

Schedule B of the standard FEC report form is used to list all disbursements. These entries are listed usually in chronological order, similar to the type of entry an individual would make for a checking account transaction. Naturally, the time spent sorting through these entries, assigning them to specific campaign accounts, and compiling their totals was one of the major hurdles of our research. Appendix C

describes how these transactions were assigned to specific campaign accounts.

Finally, because the data are compared over time, quarterly periods were used during the general election year. Often, periods were combined to ensure that the quarterly totals were consistent with every campaign. The quarters ran as follows: first quarter (January 1 through March 31), second quarter (April 1 through June 30), third quarter (July 1 through September 31), fourth quarter 1982 (October 1 through November 22), and the fourth quarter 1984 (October 1 through November 25).

FINDINGS

Before examining the fundraising and campaign expenditures of the data sample, some of the basic facts about the races used in this study will be reviewed. One external factor which cannot be overlooked is the "surge and decline effect." As indicated earlier, there were fewer congressional races considered unpredictable during the 1984 elections than during 1982. The reason, as was discussed, is that President Reagan was running for reelection during 1984 and his campaign focused public attention toward all campaigns much earlier in the election cycle. Table 4-1 demonstrates the powerful impact of having the president run for reelection: every Republican in our 1984 group won election to Congress. In 1982, on the other hand, campaign victory was

TABLE 4-1

SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS IN THE RESEARCH SAMPLE BY PARTY
(1982 and 1984)

	1982	1984
Democrats	5	0
Republicans	6	5
	(N=11)	(N=5)

SOURCE: Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, The Almanac of American Politics, 1986, (Washington: The National Journal).

less certain since both parties shared almost equally in winning seats.

Although Republicans won every election in our 1984 sample, this does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the surge of support for President Reagan swept all of these candidates into office. As Table 4-2 indicates, winning campaigns in both 1982 and 1984 raised more in total contributions than their competition. Consequently, it could be concluded that higher contributions and voter surge contributed to the success of the 1984 Republican candidates. In the absence of a presidential candidate, as in 1982, higher contributions may contribute to electoral success for congressional candidates.

The data in Table 4-2 also supports the findings of previous research. The Democrats, on average, were outspent by the Republicans in both election years. Also, the cost of campaigning for Congress continued to rise. In 1984, unsuccessful candidates raised, on average, more funds than successful candidates in the previous election. This fact supports the wisdom of humorist Will Rogers who said: "Politics has become so expensive that it takes lots of money to even get beat with."

Comparison of Fundraising Over Time

Tables 4-3 and 4-4 compare the fundraising sources of successful and unsuccessful campaigns over time for 1982 and 1984 respectively. Once again, the data support the findings of past research. In all cases, individuals provided the largest share of

TABLE 4-2

AVERAGE TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR HOUSE CANDIDATES
IN THE RESEARCH SAMPLE
(1982 and 1984)

	1982	1984
Winners	\$420,344 (N=11)	\$542,132 (N=5)
Losers	\$330,808 (N=11)	\$465,026 (N=5)
Democrats	\$308,819 (N=11)	\$465,026 (N=5)
Republicans	\$416,067 (N=11)	\$542,132 (N=5)

SOURCE: Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, The Almanac of American Politics, 1986, (Washington: The National Journal).

TABLE 4-3

FUNDRAISING SOURCES OVER TIME FOR HOUSE CANDIDATES
FROM THE RESEARCH SAMPLE
(Actual Average Dollars Raised for General Election Year 1982)

Successful Campaigns (N=11)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Individuals (%)	\$22,799	\$26,613	\$40,817	\$54,404	\$144,633 (57.0%)
PACs (%)	4,450	10,832	22,223	53,534	91,039 (35.9%)
Party (%)	600	3,149	3,339	10,824	17,912 (7.1%)
Total (%)	\$27,849 (11.0%)	\$40,594 (16.0%)	\$66,379 (26.2%)	\$118,762 (46.8%)	\$253,584 (100.0%)

Unsuccessful Campaigns (N=11)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Individuals (%)	\$16,638	\$24,446	\$44,698	\$44,330	\$130,112 (48.0%)
PACs (%)	1,521	6,179	47,580	63,007	118,287 (43.6%)
Party (%)	1,250	4,738	6,833	10,086	22,907 (8.4%)
Total (%)	\$19,409 (7.2%)	\$35,363 (13.0%)	\$99,111 (36.5%)	\$117,423 (43.3%)	\$271,306 (100.0%)

TABLE 4-4

FUNDRAISING SOURCES OVER TIME FOR HOUSE CANDIDATES
FROM THE RESEARCH SAMPLE
(Actual Average Dollars Raised for General Election Year 1984)

Successful Campaigns (N=5)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Individuals (%)	\$34,560	\$53,210	\$68,083	\$80,846	\$236,699 (52.7%)
PACs (%)	5,835	11,946	66,960	107,755	192,496 (42.8%)
Party (%)	100	2,350	11,951	5,903	20,304 (4.5%)
Total (%)	\$40,495 (9.0%)	\$67,506 (15.0%)	\$146,994 (32.7%)	\$194,504 (43.3%)	\$449,499 (100.0%)

Unsuccessful Campaigns (N=5)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Individuals (%)	\$40,825	\$42,454	\$60,911	\$75,107	\$219,297 (62.3%)
PACs (%)	4,938	15,196	26,386	73,445	119,965 (34.1%)
Party (%)	0	1,139	4,137	7,344	12,620 (3.6%)
Total (%)	\$45,763 (13.0%)	\$58,789 (16.7%)	\$91,434 (26.0%)	\$155,896 (44.3%)	\$351,882 (100.0%)

support for congressional candidates followed closely by PAC contributions. Party contributions provide less than ten percent of total campaign funding for all cases.

The timing of contributions is the issue of chief importance to this research. On average, every campaign type in the study received contributions from all sources at an increasing rate over time. Surprisingly, the unsuccessful campaigns in 1982 received more contributions by the end of the third quarter than their competition. In 1984, however, the trend was reversed dramatically. This suggests that electoral success may not depend on raising more funds sooner than your opponent.

The fact remains, however, that the fourth quarter tends to be the most successful fund raising period. In the data sample of races, anywhere from 43 to 46 percent of every campaign budget was raised in the fourth quarter. Without question, this makes campaign planning and budgeting a very difficult task at best. Consequently, the role of campaign experience (or the use of a good consultant where experience is lacking) may be the factor which leads campaigns to make the best possible budgetary decisions.

Comparison of General Spending Patterns

Tables 4-5 through 4-8 present a breakdown of the average expenditures over time for every campaign type in our sample. When examined as an entire group, our results are consistent with previous research. The mean total expenditures over time

TABLE 4-5

AVERAGE EXPENDITURES OVER TIME FOR SUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
 FROM THE 1982 RESEARCH SAMPLE
 (Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Staff/Travel	\$6,798	\$8,171	\$15,642	\$23,041	\$53,652 (15.1%)
Office	2,701	5,204	8,738	10,026	26,669 (7.5%)
Advertising	14,595	30,159	68,010	126,807	239,571 (67.3%)
Polling	2,400	3,658	1,955	1,178	9,191 (2.6%)
Consultant	3,523	1,043	3,232	3,766	11,564 (3.2%)
Other	843	1,718	2,478	10,397	15,436 (4.3%)
Total (%)	\$30,860 (8.7%)	\$49,953 (14.0%)	\$100,055 (28.1%)	\$175,215 (49.2%)	\$356,083 (100.0%)

(N=11)

TABLE 4-6

AVERAGE EXPENDITURES OVER TIME FOR UNSUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
 FROM THE 1982 RESEARCH SAMPLE
 (Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Staff/Travel	\$6,057	\$11,272	\$21,027	\$25,639	\$63,995 (21.6%)
Office	2,186	4,567	9,377	8,325	24,455 (8.3%)
Advertising	13,878	19,350	56,772	84,579	174,579 (59.0%)
Polling	9	668	3,110	3,321	7,108 (2.4%)
Consultant	1,674	5,519	4,020	3,084	14,297 (4.8%)
Other	1,369	2,432	2,097	5,620	11,518 (3.9%)
Total (%)	\$25,173 (8.5%)	\$43,808 (14.8%)	\$96,403 (32.6%)	\$130,568 (44.1%)	\$295,952 (100.0%)

(N=11)

TABLE 4-7

AVERAGE EXPENDITURES OVER TIME FOR SUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
 FROM THE 1984 RESEARCH SAMPLE
 (Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Staff/Travel	\$5,117	\$12,675	\$30,531	\$27,261	\$75,584 (16.8%)
Office	3,992	9,261	16,553	13,167	42,973 (9.5%)
Advertising	14,369	38,276	63,410	153,123	269,178 (59.7%)
Polling	9,271	8,138	6,385	4,928	28,722 (6.4%)
Consultant	3,010	2,583	5,979	3,978	15,550 (3.4%)
Other	474	4,192	3,167	11,164	18,997 (4.2%)
Total (%)	\$36,233 (8.0%)	\$75,125 (16.7%)	\$126,025 (27.9%)	\$213,621 (47.4%)	\$451,004 (100.0%)

(N=5)

TABLE 4-8

AVERAGE EXPENDITURES OVER TIME FOR UNSUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
 FROM THE 1984 RESEARCH SAMPLE
 (Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Staff/Travel	\$734	\$3,615	\$15,085	\$6,760	\$26,194 (7.1%)
Office	5,850	4,702	10,751	20,793	42,096 (11.3%)
Advertising	25,726	33,219	53,019	150,684	262,648 (70.8%)
Polling	1,063	2,991	7,035	2,602	13,691 (3.7%)
Consultant	2,440	1,620	1,958	5,707	11,725 (3.2%)
Other	859	2,068	4,782	7,019	14,728 (4.0%)
Total (%)	\$36,672 (9.9%)	\$48,215 (13.0%)	\$92,630 (25.0%)	\$193,565 (52.2%)	\$371,082 (100.0%)

(N=5)

increases for all campaigns and usually reflects the increases on the fundraising side. Nearly half of all campaign funds are spent during the fourth quarter and nearly three-fourths of all funds are spent during the last two quarters.

Fundraising appears to be a key indicator of how quickly campaign funds are spent. Although all campaigns increased their spending with time, successful candidates increased their spending at a higher rate than unsuccessful candidates. This phenomenon may be the result of the successful candidate raising more money in less time than their competition.

The fact that successful candidates spent more money than unsuccessful candidates, however, does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that higher spending (and therefore better fundraising) leads to electoral success. Rather, it is important to examine where this money was spent and how it may contribute to their success.

Looking at the internal budgeting patterns of our entire sample, our findings are consistent with the research performed by Goldenberg and Traugott. This study differs from theirs in two basic ways: we examined only competitive races and our funding categories were combined into fewer groups. Like the candidates in their study tagged as "hopefuls," the campaigns in this study spent about two-thirds of their budgets on advertising, followed by staff and travel, office expenses, research, and "other." The budgeting patterns of nearly all of the campaign types fell within a reasonable range of the spending patterns observed by Goldenberg

and Traugott. This suggests that there is little difference in the ways that campaigns budget their overall research over time (our percentages run slightly higher than the findings of Goldenberg and Traugott because our data included only funds expended during the election year).

Unlike Goldenberg and Traugott, this study included separate categories for general consulting expenses and polling and research. As mentioned previously, general campaign consultants are most important for candidates with little congressional campaign experience. Because the data includes only candidates running for their first term, probably most of our candidates suffer from inexperience. Accurate polling, on the other hand, is necessary to enable the campaign to develop a message in tune with the minds of the voters and to make adjustments in the campaign media presentation.

As predicted in the introduction, successful campaigns in both election years outspent their competition for polling (both in percentage of their total budgets and in actual dollars). In 1984, successful campaigns doubled their polling expenditures over the unsuccessful campaigns. Keeping in mind that presidential surge may have contributed to the success of every Republican, it cannot be concluded that higher spending for polling leads to electoral success, but rather that accurate polling (as measured by higher spending in this case) may be a factor contributing to success in close elections. Further research is recommended on the importance of polling in congressional election victories.

As mentioned, general consulting services may provide inexperienced candidates with the necessary information and guidance to be successful. In the research sample, very few campaigns did not employ a general consultant at some point during the election year which supports the assertion that campaigning is becoming increasingly professional. Surprisingly, unsuccessful candidates in the 1982 spent more for consultants than did their competition. The reverse is true in 1984. Consequently, it is concluded that for these two elections, general consulting services did not have a strong impact on the outcome.

Comparison of Media Spending Patterns

As discussed previously, advertising expenditures are by far the single largest item in congressional campaign budgets. This seems logical since the business of a congressional campaign is to present the candidate and the campaign message to the voting public. The question which remains concerns how campaign funds are best spent within the advertising/media budget.

Once again, we turn to Goldenberg and Traugott for comparison since their research is the first in this area of study and our approach is very similar to theirs. In their analysis, Goldenberg and Traugott examined media budgets for open-seat congressional campaigns during 1978. They found that the combined spending for television and radio represented the the largest account at 32.8 percent of the average media budget. This was followed by printed

material (31.3 percent) and undesignated activities including photographs and movies (27.9 percent). Newspaper and outdoor advertising represented less than ten percent of this budget. Goldenberg and Traugott did not make any indication whether this budgeting pattern led to electoral success nor how these funds were spent over time.

The remaining tables in this thesis, Tables 4-9 through 4-12, provide a breakdown of the average advertising expenditures over time for successful and unsuccessful congressional candidates in 1982 and 1984. For the data sample as a whole, our findings reflect the conclusions drawn by Goldenberg and Traugott: television and radio are the largest single budget item followed by direct mail (includes all printed material) with newspaper and outdoor media expenditures totalling less than ten percent.

The most noticeable difference between our findings and the findings of Goldenberg and Traugott are that while they found television and radio totalled 32.8 percent followed closely by undesignated activities, our research indicated television and radio expenditures range in the upper sixtieth percent of the total media budget and undesignated activities less than five percent. This finding demonstrates a dramatic change in campaign budgeting preferences since 1978. Whereas television and radio expenditures were considered important in 1978, these media have become more critical to campaigns in recent years.

Caution must be added to this finding. Goldenberg and Traugott never indicated how they classified budget items such as

TABLE 4-9

AVERAGE ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES OVER TIME
FOR SUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
FROM THE 1982 RESEARCH SAMPLE
(Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Direct Mail	\$3,925	\$4,658	\$11,230	\$20,633	\$40,446 (16.9%)
TV & Radio	7,052	20,601	46,824	95,366	169,843 (70.9%)
Newspaper	168	308	523	3,984	4,983 (2.1%)
Outdoor	1,641	2,597	6,394	3,710	14,342 (6.0%)
Undesignated	1,809	1,995	3,039	3,114	9,957 (4.2%)
Total (%)	\$14,595 (6.1%)	\$30,159 (12.6%)	\$68,010 (28.4%)	\$126,807 (52.9%)	\$239,571 (100.0%)

(N=11)

TABLE 4-10

AVERAGE ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES OVER TIME
FOR UNSUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
FROM THE 1982 RESEARCH SAMPLE
(Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Direct Mail	\$2,501	\$7,419	\$18,456	\$19,508	\$47,884 (27.4%)
TV & Radio	9,217	7,014	31,586	59,462	107,279 (61.5%)
Newspaper	0	268	461	1,702	2,431 (1.4%)
Outdoor	2,093	2,911	3,694	2,449	11,147 (6.4%)
Undesignated	67	1,738	2,566	1,458	5,829 (3.3%)
Total (%)	\$13,878 (7.9%)	\$19,350 (11.1%)	\$56,763 (32.5%)	\$84,579 (48.4%)	\$174,570 (100.0%)

(N=11)

TABLE 4-11

AVERAGE ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES OVER TIME
FOR SUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
FROM THE 1984 RESEARCH SAMPLE
(Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Direct Mail	\$3,819	\$14,095	\$17,562	\$21,994	\$57,470 (21.4%)
TV & Radio	9,513	19,932	36,536	120,757	186,738 (69.4%)
Newspaper	0	881	686	4,905	6,472 (2.4%)
Outdoor	660	2,395	5,107	2,942	11,104 (4.1%)
Undesignated	377	973	3,519	2,525	7,394 (2.7%)
Total (%)	\$14,369 (5.3%)	\$38,276 (14.2%)	\$63,410 (23.6%)	\$153,123 (56.9%)	\$269,178 (100.0%)

(N=5)

TABLE 4-12

AVERAGE ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES OVER TIME
 FOR UNSUCCESSFUL HOUSE CANDIDATES
 FROM THE 1984 RESEARCH SAMPLE
 (Actual Average Dollars Spent for General Election Year)

Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Direct Mail	\$2,459	\$4,177	\$13,142	\$25,473	\$45,251 (17.2%)
TV & Radio	17,693	19,717	35,326	110,506	183,242 (69.8%)
Newspaper	401	2,734	1,971	10,457	15,563 (5.9%)
Outdoor	5,071	4,178	2,021	2,346	13,616 (5.2%)
Undesignated	102	2,413	559	1,902	4,976 (1.9%)
Total (%)	\$25,726 (9.8%)	\$33,219 (12.6%)	\$53,019 (20.2%)	\$150,684 (57.4%)	\$262,648 (100.0%)

(N=5)

media consultant expenses. In this study, this expense is included as part of total radio and television expenditures which may inflate our figures slightly over what Goldenberg and Traugott may have found under similar circumstances. The difference between the findings of this study and the findings Goldenberg and Traugott found in 1978, however, clearly indicates television and radio have become increasingly important media for congressional campaigns.

In the data sample, very little difference is observed between winning campaigns and losing campaigns in overall media spending patterns: each campaign type spends similar amounts in each of the budgeting categories. As mentioned previously, all successful campaigns, on average, spent more money on their entire media budgets than losing campaigns. In 1982, this holds true for each of the budgeting categories with the exception of direct mail. In this election year, unsuccessful candidates were clearly outspent on television and radio, but made up the difference in direct mail. One possible conclusion that could be drawn would be that media dollars spent on television and radio are more effective in moving voters than direct mail. This hypothesis cannot be disproved in 1984 since successful campaigns spent more than unsuccessful campaigns in both of these areas.

Another conclusion which may be drawn from the 1984 data is that higher campaign expenditures for outdoor and newspaper advertising may not effectively move voters. In 1984, unsuccessful campaigns outspent their competition in these areas

while remaining competitive in radio and television spending. It is important to keep in mind, however, that presidential surge may have distorted the electoral impact of these media campaigns and that this hypothesis cannot be conclusive. Therefore, it is recommended that this study be replicated over several elections before these conclusions can be supported.

Like the overall budgeting patterns of our campaigns, most campaigns in our sample increased spending in each of its media accounts over time. Outdoor and undesignated activities tend to break from this trend. For outdoor advertising, this seems logical because billboard purchases (a major ingredient of outdoor media) are made usually just once while the use of the billboard extends through the entire campaign.

All other media devices (direct mail, television and radio, and newspapers) tend to increase over time. Like most other campaign spending patterns, half of the expenditures made in these areas occur during the fourth quarter of the campaign year. There is no essential difference between winning and losing campaigns in our sample regarding spending patterns over time.

SUMMARY

This chapter presented the methodology used in this study and the research findings. The objective of this study has been to compare the fundraising and spending patterns over time of competitive congressional elections to determine whether campaign budgeting preferences influence election outcome.

The data consisted of financial reports submitted to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) by our selected campaigns. The research sample included campaigns from both 1982 and 1984 election years to account for the possible impact of having a presidential election during one of the congressional elections. To avoid the influence of incumbency, all of the candidates in our sample were running for their first term. Because the purpose of this study was to examine races where campaign spending could influence election outcome, the sample consisted of competitive races. Specifically, congressional elections considered too close to predict by the Congressional Quarterly, a nonpartisan publication, were examined.

Although the effects of incumbency were successfully eliminated from our data sample, the influences of the presidential elections affected our data sample dramatically. Fewer campaigns qualified for our 1984 sample than in 1982 because fewer were considered competitive. Furthermore, the congressional candidates from the president's party won election in every case in 1984. The 1982 elections, on the other hand, provided more

close races for our sample and the number of successful campaigns were evenly split between the Democrats and Republicans.

Successful candidates, we found, differ from their competition by having, on average, larger total budgets. However, it was found that there is very little difference between the internal spending patterns over time for successful and unsuccessful campaigns. Like campaign fundraising, campaign expenditure activity is very slow in the early stages of the campaign and is concentrated in the fourth quarter of the election year. Nearly half of all expenditures are spent during the final quarter of the election year, suggesting that campaign budgeting depends heavily on fundraising and, therefore, is a difficult task for campaign managers.

The one exceptional difference between successful and unsuccessful campaigns involves the use of opinion polling. Although successful candidates tend to outspend their competition in every area, the difference is more dramatic in the area of opinion polling. This study could not determine whether higher spending for opinion polling led to electoral success, but opinion polling and better information in general would allow campaigns to make better strategic decisions. It is recommended that the significance of this finding be explored by further research.

Advertising expenditures are, on average, the single largest budget item for all candidates. Most advertising funds are spent on radio and television followed by direct mail and printing. When compared to the findings of Goldenberg and Traugott, it was found that our sample group spent more funds, both in total dollars and as a budget percentage, on radio and television advertising than past campaigns. This finding is evidence that campaign professionalization has increased at the congressional level.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The objective of this study has been to compare the fundraising and spending patterns over time of competitive congressional elections to determine whether campaign budgeting preferences influence election outcome. In this chapter, we will summarize the research findings and draw conclusions.

This study began with a review of past research inquiring into the factors contributing to electoral success. In the first chapter, it was found that current congressional election theory relies on the impact of incumbency to explain most electoral patterns. The advantages incumbents enjoy can be traced to some very real characteristics of holding office including: better name recognition, subsidized office support, and an increased inclination among voters to choose incumbents. Furthermore, it was argued that incumbents have become more effective in employing these advantages for electoral purposes since their reelection rates now often exceed 90 percent.

The other major factors discussed in chapter one affecting congressional election patterns include: party affiliation, presidential elections, and the state of the economy. Research indicates that these three interrelated variables may explain the

aggregate election phenomenon of "surge and decline." Put briefly, congressional candidates running in the party of a successful presidential candidate tend to win election. This further adds to the argument that congressional campaigns tend to be uncompetitive. When examined on a district by district basis, however, the "surge and decline" effect fails to predict who will win in a particular congressional district, especially when a race is rated as competitive by both sides. Consequently, it was concluded that this study must explore the impact of campaign technology and campaign spending on election outcomes as possible factors explaining this gap in congressional election theory.

The second chapter provided an overview of the various technologies available to congressional campaigns and how they have been used by past campaigns. Initially, the argument was presented that political campaigning has become increasingly professionalized; that the use of radio and television, opinion polling, and direct mail and phone banks have replaced the party apparatus of earlier campaigns. Until recently, it has been difficult to study which technological strategies are employed by campaigns and whether any particular approach is more successful than another. Furthermore, research inquiring into which strategies lead to electoral success is virtually nonexistent.

Since campaign technologies cannot be used without campaign funds, the answer to determining campaign strategy and success may lie in an examination of campaign budgeting preferences. The third chapter reviewed past studies of money in politics beginning

with a broad overview of campaign finance and concluding with a review of congressional campaign budget preference research. The first section of this chapter explored the most studied aspect of campaign spending: fundraising and the rising cost of campaigning. It was found that campaign funding sources include individual donors, political action committees (PACs), and the political parties. Individuals contribute the largest portion of campaign funds by far followed by PACs and parties. Total contributions and the costs associated with running for office have increased well above the rate of inflation in recent years.

The second section of this chapter examined whether overall spending levels determine electoral success. For many years, it was believed that presidential candidates spending the most during their campaigns won election. This belief was discredited when both Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman won election while spending less than their opponents. Recent research has determined, however, that campaign expenditures, along with incumbency and party strength, may be reliable predictors of election outcome. In very close open seat elections, campaign spending may be the most significant factor.

The final section of this chapter attempts to determine how campaign funds affect election outcomes by examining internal campaign budgeting patterns. Until 1974, when changes in federal election laws required federal campaigns to submit detailed financial statements, very little was known or written about congressional campaign budgeting. Since then, several studies

have been published, the most extensive work being produced by Goldenberg and Traugott. In their study, Goldenberg and Traugott compared the internal spending patterns over time of various candidates ranked by their predicted likelihood of success. Among their conclusions, they found that most campaign funds (58 percent) were spent on advertising, suggesting that advertising is seen as the most important area for campaign funds. Contrary to this observation, they found that as much as 23 percent of all campaign funds were spent on undesignated activities, suggesting that campaign professionalization may still lag in the lower federal races. Furthermore, they found all candidates spent more than 64 percent of their budgets in the fourth quarter of the campaign.

The fourth chapter presents the findings of this study. Because Goldenberg and Traugott performed the definitive study for current research into internal campaign budgeting patterns, this thesis was patterned on their model. Special attention was paid to whether congressional campaigns still spent most of their funds on advertising and whether congressional campaigns continue to employ a strategy of spending most of their money in the final stages of the campaign.

The data sample was collected from the financial reports submitted to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) by the campaigns selected for the study. Because the purpose here was to examine races where campaign spending could influence election outcome, the data sample consisted of competitive races.

Specifically, this study examined congressional elections considered too close to predict by the Congressional Quarterly, a nonpartisan publication. The campaigns in the data sample included races from both 1982 and 1984 election years. This was done to account for the impact of the "surge and decline" effect. All of the candidates in the sample were running for their first terms thereby eliminating the effect of incumbency.

Although the role of incumbency was successfully eliminated from the data sample, the cases were affected dramatically by the influences of the presidential elections. Fewer were considered competitive in 1984 than in 1982 and, therefore, fewer campaigns qualified for the 1984 sample. Furthermore, every congressional candidate from the president's party won election in 1984. The 1982 elections, on the other hand, provided more close races for the sample and the number of successful campaigns were evenly split between the Democrats and Republicans. This clearly reflects the "surge and decline" effect associated with the reelection of a popular presidential candidate.

Successful candidates, it was found, differ from their competition by having, on average, larger total budgets. However, there is very little difference between the internal spending patterns over time for successful and unsuccessful campaigns. Like campaign fundraising, campaign expenditure activity is very slow in the early stages of the campaign and is concentrated in the fourth quarter of the election year. Nearly half of all expenditures are spent during the final quarter of the election

year, suggesting that campaign budgeting depends heavily on fundraising. This makes the task of projecting campaign budgets difficult for campaign managers.

One exceptional difference was observed between successful and unsuccessful campaigns in the area of spending for opinion polling. Successful candidates clearly outspent their competition in the area of opinion polling. This study could not determine whether higher spending for opinion polling led to electoral success, but opinion polling and better information in general would allow campaigns to make better strategic decisions. Further research may draw stronger conclusions regarding the significance of this finding.

This study was consistent with past research showing advertising expenditures are, on average, the single largest budget item for all candidates. Most advertising funds are spent on radio and television followed by direct mail and printing. When compared to the findings of Goldenberg and Traugott, the sample group spent more funds, both in total dollars and as a budget percentage, on radio and television advertising than past campaigns, suggesting that campaign professionalization has increased at the congressional level since their research.

Money is a critical resource for open seat congressional campaigns. Because professional technologies are more widely used in the congressional campaign arena, financial contributions are essential for candidates running credible campaigns. This is especially true for candidates who are not well known by the

voting public such as challengers and candidates running for a first term. In very few case, however, can money alone win an election. Other factors such as the presence of an incumbent in the race or a popular presidential candidate on the ballot eliminates most congressional candidates from serious consideration by potential donors and the voters.

Given similiar circumstances between two candidates in a competitive race, campaign spending can make a difference, especially if a campaign fails to budget its resources properly. Most campaigns seldom reach the stage of being competitive and, therefore, do not raise the funds necessary to run a credible race. The campaigns in this study were already successful because they were considered competitive. It was found that these campaigns budgeted their funds in a very similar manner. Assuming that the majority of these campaigns have made, in the past, correct budgetary decisions, campaigns straying from this norm would run the risk of defeat. Therefore, spending large sums of money on advertising in the final stages of the campaign is probably the best budgeting decision possible. Furthermore, because winning campaigns in competitive races spent more on opinion polling, good polling information may be critical to to electoral success.

APPENDIX A

1982 CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS USED IN RESEARCH SAMPLE

District	Candidate	Funds Raised ^a	Vote(%)
Arizona-05	Jim McNulty (D)	\$343,318	48%
	Jim Kolbe (R)*	532,588	50%
Florida-09	George H. Sheldon (D)	\$379,692	49%
	Michael Bilirakis (R)*	299,558	51%
Kansas-02	Jim Slattery (D)*	\$263,873	57%
	Morris Kay (R)	312,459	43%
Maine-01	John M. Kerry (D)	\$288,924	48%
	John R. McKernan (R)*	384,594	50%
MISS.-02	Robert G. Clark (D)	\$208,136	48%
	Webb Franklin (R)*	318,376	50%
Nevada-02	Mary Gojack (D)	\$248,865	41%
	Barbara Vucanavich (R)*	604,624	56%
Oregon-02	Larryann Willis (D)	\$225,762	44%
	Robert F. Smith (R)*	492,808	56%
Texas-16	Ronald D. Coleman (D)*	\$374,821	54%
	Patrick B. Haggerty (R)	318,180	44%
Texas-26	Tom Vandergriff (D)*	\$948,024	50%
	Jim Bradshaw (R)	516,781	50%
Virginia-06	James R. Olin (D)*	\$245,708	50%
	Kevin G. Miller (R)	260,976	49%
West VA.-02	Harley O. Staggers (D)*	\$158,806	64%
	J. D. Hinkle, Jr. (R)	535,796	36%

* indicates winner

^aTotal of all funds raised during the primary and general elections.

SOURCE: Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, The Almanac of American Politics, 1986, (Washington: The National Journal).

APPENDIX B

1984 CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS USED IN RESEARCH SAMPLE

District	Candidate	Funds Raised ^a	Vote(%)
Alabama-01	Frank McRight (D)	\$582,198	49%
	H. L. Callahan (R)*	554,557	51%
Kansas-03	John E. Reardon (D)	\$273,950	40%
	Jan Meyers (R)*	442,459	55%
New York-20	Oren J. Teicher (D)	\$433,059	48%
	Joseph D. DioGuardi (R)*	644,128	50%
N. C.-09	D. G. Martin (D)	\$686,495	50%
	J. A. McMillan, III (R)*	683,535	50%
Utah-02	Frances Farley (D)	\$349,427	49%
	David S. Monson (R)*	385,982	49%

* indicates winner

^aTotal of all funds raised during the primary and general elections.

SOURCE: Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, The Almanac of American Politics, 1986, (Washington: The National Journal).

APPENDIX C

ACCOUNTING SYSTEM USED TO SUMMARIZE
ITEMIZED DISBURSEMENTS FROM FEC SCHEDULE B*

Account	Disbursement Entries
Staff/Travel	Includes: staff salaries, staff expenses, candidate expenses, phone bank payroll.
Office	Includes: office rent, utilities, office supplies, office equipment, petty cash.
Advertising	
Direct Mail	Includes: postage, printing, computer services, brochures, lists, address labels.
TV & Radio	Includes: production costs, consulting fees, air time.
Newspaper	Includes: advertisement costs, subscriptions.
Outdoor	Includes: billboards, signs, buttons, bumper stickers, t-shirts, sweat shirts, book matches, shopping bags.
Undesignated	Includes: photographers, logo design, items difficult to interpret.
Polling	Includes: consulting fees, research, targeting data, canvassing costs.
Consultant	Includes: general and fundraising consulting services.
Other	Includes: special events, candidate training, fees for guest speakers, filing fee, any miscellaneous expenditures.

*Each campaign must submit a Schedule B to the FEC listing all expenditures each quarter and prior to and after each primary and general election.

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